

THE

P U L P I T

SERMONS BY EMINENT LIVING MINISTERS.

VOLUME XLVII.

And as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new fledg'd offspring to the skies,
They try each art, improve each dull delay,
Allure to brighter worlds, and lead the way '

GOLDSMITH

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P R E F A C E.

AGAIN we complete a Volume, gathering together the sayings of many holy seasons: a store and treasury, to which not a few will find it well to turn, though to some unhappily it can but be a record—

“Of fair occasion gone for ever by.”

The half-year's collection, regarded as a leaf of history, takes its distinctive character from the passing of the Act for a trebled and permanent grant to the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth. We refer to it with some feeling of shame, when we remember how thoroughly since the Reformation the falsehood of Popery has been exposed to the view of this nation. Who would have thought, that England had not more heart in her? It seemed as if, compared with a past age, power had departed from “the sovereign Pontiff;” and yet—

————— “we who struck the lion down,
Pay the wolf homage.”

The whole question is discussed in these pages; but we will sum up the matter with the protest prepared by a Prelate of the established Church, and entered on the Journals of the House of Lords:—

1. I hold it to be contradictory to the first principles of the Reformation, to provide for the establishment of an order of men to be educated for the express purpose of resisting and defeating that Reformation—men whose office and main duty it will be to disseminate and to perpetuate those very corruptions of the Christian faith, which the Church of England has solemnly abjured, and some of which the whole Legislature of England has declared to be superstitious and idolatrous.

2. The most unbounded toleration of religious error does not require us to provide for the maintenance and the growth of that error, but rather imposes upon us a strong

obligation to prevent by all just and peaceful means its increase, and to discourage its continuance.

- 3: This measure has a tendency to raise in the public mind a belief that religious truth is a matter of indifference to the State; and by consequence to subvert that principle of succession to the throne, which is the title of the present dynasty, and which forms an integral and essential part of the constitution of this kingdom.

This testimony is true. And never has there been more need than on this occasion, to hold fast by great and simple truths. Showy speakers and shrewd sophists have been clamorous in defence of this measure; and it has had the utmost aid of that "black art" of deceitful reasoning. The knot is soon cut by "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God;" and the only Wise, who to the docile "gives liberally" of wisdom, is our one and safe resort.

"Oppress'd with argumental tyranny,
Still routed reason finds a safe retreat in Thee."

We have only to add our customary acknowledgment of the aid of many Ministers, who have placed us under great obligation to them.



THE PULPIT.

RETROSPECT OF A YEAR OF MERCIES ILL DESERVED.

A SERMON,

BY THE HON. AND REV. BAPTIST W. NOEL, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW, ON TUESDAY EVENING,
DECEMBER 31, 1844.

His Annual Sermon on the last night of the Year.

"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."—Psalm ciii. 10.

It is not unbecoming for us, my Christian brethren, at the close of another year, to recal our temper and conduct towards God, and to recollect His dealings towards us. These two subjects may well occupy us for a short time; and may serve to lead us to the temper, in which the Psalmist exclaimed in the words of our text—"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

I. What has been *our* temper and conduct, my brethren, towards the ever-blessed God, in the year which is now closing?

He, the Author of our being, who has upheld us all through this year, whose bounties have still been fresh every morning and continued every evening, deserved from us much love and service; and He who gave His own Son to die for us, that we might be rescued from eternal death, had a new and still more impressive claim to all that we could do in return. What has this ever-glorious Being deserved at our hands through the past year!—He who, being infinitely powerful and infinitely holy, is yet as merciful and as patient, as He is great and pure.

He has claimed from us, as His redeemed people, as the disciples of Jesus Christ, brought nigh by grace, that we should love Him with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength. And we have assented to that claim; we have known it to be most reasonable. We

have been conscious it was right, that we should feel our hearts powerfully attracted by all His benefits towards us; we have known, that we ought to delight in His glorious attributes; we have felt, that to love Him and every thing that He called us to do was but the most obvious and the most moderate return for all that He has been, and all that He has done for us. But while this has been His claim, we must recollect, with the greatest sorrow, in the past year, how very much of defect He has seen in us in this matter. How very little we have loved Him! How much alienation of heart has He seen, and condemned! What coldness in all our devotions, in all our services! Perhaps, through the whole year, we can scarcely recal more than a few hours, in which we have felt any ardour of gratitude towards God, or any ardour of delight in His perfections. He claimed it from us; we knew that it was His due; but the vast number of our hours and days have been spent in grievous defect. A *little* love was the utmost, that we have ever repaid to Him, whom we were to love "with all our heart, and soul, and mind and strength."

It was a righteous claim of God upon us, which was expressed in that prophetic declaration of His Word—"In that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me: behold, God is my sal-

vation; I will trust, and not be afraid." "trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." A Being, whose perfections have been so proved to us, and whose love has been so great towards us, demanded an unbounded trust: He claimed from us, most justly, that in our hours of prosperity and peace, we should feel no trust in *them*, no trust in the arm of flesh, no trust in our friends—ourselves—our circumstances—but trust Him; and in the hour of sorrow and danger, He demanded that we should feel no doubt, no distrust, but commit ourselves to His Almighty and faithful care, with perfect, loving confidence. We assented to the claim; we knew it was right. And yet, in the past year, on how many, many occasions we have been disposed to forget our dependence on Him, when we were happy! and on many more—on the smallest occasion of danger or disquietude—how has our trust in Him failed, and we have shown by dejection and anxiety how much more we trusted the creature, than we could trust the Creator! And God has seen it; and all this defect of confidence in God has been registered in heaven; and He knows how, through the past year, there has been a grievous defect in that trust in Him through Christ, which ought to have been so easy, and would have been so sweet.

He asked of us, very justly, throughout the past year, that we should unfeignedly and unreservedly submit ourselves to Him. The language of His apostle was the language of righteousness—"Submit yourselves therefore unto God." We assented to *that* claim; we knew, that we ought entirely to submit ourselves to His Gospel, to His law, and to His providence. We have been quite sure, throughout this year, that we ought unfeignedly to place our whole hope in His mercy, and surrender ourselves entirely to that way of salvation He has provided for us; and in a measure we have done so. We have felt, that we ought to submit ourselves to His law and to His will, because we knew that He had a right to reign over us, and that His reign was wise and good; and we have known, that we ought to submit ourselves absolutely to His providence, accepting with perfect and peaceful resignation all that He should appoint and provide. But though we have acknowledged the righteousness of this claim, how much of self-will has the Lord seen in us, all through this year! On how many occasions were we preferring our will to His! And if He has been pleased to send any circumstances to try our patience, how speedily we found our-

selves irritable! How soon were we disposed to murmur! how little to acquiesce in His righteous dispensations towards us!

Again: the Lord asked from us, that we should do His will, with unreserved and cheerful activity and diligence. For this, His Word declares—"this is the love of God, that we walk after His commandments;" and if He asked us to love Him with all the heart, He asked us to obey Him with all our powers. But though this was a just and righteous claim from God, on how many occasions in the past year have we sinned against God, in thought, in word and in deed! In what relation of life have we not sinned? What place in which we have dwelt, has been free from it? To what class of employments can we look, and not find sin? There has been disobedience—defect—every where. Constantly has He seen that His laws have been forgotten and overlooked by us, although we knew them to be "holy, and just, and good." We felt sure that not one of them could be altered without doing us mischief; we knew that they were every one of them calculated to bless us; and at the very least, we must recal how defectively we have obeyed them all.

God very righteously has demanded of us His servants, through the past year, that we should be unreservedly devoted to His service. This command of the apostle was a righteous command from God—"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." And we said, Amen; we knew it to be a reasonable service; and we have many times wished we might fulfil that command. And when the same apostle from Christ our Master said to us—"Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are God's:" we felt that this likewise was true. Our souls are His; our faculties are His; our property is His; our time is His; our influence in the world is His. All that we have had through this past year, and all that we have been through this past year, have been God's; and He was to be served and glorified by an unreserved devotedness of all to Him. And we have known this to be due. If we had followed Him with the implicit faith of Abraham and been willing to sacrifice the very dearest object of our hearts to please Him, as Abraham did; if for His sake we had turned our backs upon the world, as

Moses did ; if we had been able to confess Him before His enemies, as Daniel did ; if we had laboured with something of the untiring, self-sacrificing zeal of Paul ; if we had thus employed our all to glorify God, desiring with the most intense earnestness, that we might praise and serve Him in the world,—we should have done our simple duty. If we had laboured through this year, by example, by direct instruction, by remonstrance, by prayer, and by every other means in our power, to bring sinners to Christ, and to improve His people, and lead them, our fellow-believers, to serve Him more earnestly, we should have done our simple duty. But what *have we* done in the past year ? How many sinners have we brought to Christ ?—or, as at best we are only instruments, how many have we tried to bring to Christ ? earnestly, and prayerfully and perseveringly tried to bring to Christ ? How many of His enemies have we, when the occasion called for it, rebuked ? How much of our time has been given, heartily and earnestly, to serve the Lord ? How much of all that we have done through the past year, has been done with one simple purpose—that we might accomplish His will, and give Him glory ? How much of the arrangements of our lives, and of our habits, has been to please God—and how much to please ourselves ? Alas ! there is defect everywhere. God has seen, that all the year has been one vast defect in this particular ; and this demand, that we should give our bodies and our souls “a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service,” condemns us in every one of the three hundred and sixty-five days, that have been spent since we last thus assembled together.

Then, for all this, (to pass over many other painful proofs of sad deficiency,)—for all this, was it not right, my Christian brethren, that we should feel in the recollection of it, and feel at the moment, something as Job did, when he was constrained to exclaim—“Behold, I am vile ?” Ought we not to have felt, in this consciousness of grievous defect, something like the same patriarch, when, contemplating the majesty of God, he said—“I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee ; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes ?” If this language became the holiest man on earth (by the testimony of God himself), how much more must it become us, my brethren, through a year of many defects ! But have we felt it ? Have we said from our hearts often before God—“I am vile”—

“I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes ?” Has God heard that language ? has God witnessed those feelings ? Alas ! He has seen a ready, foolish, pride. He has seen how easily vanity might be excited, and how ready we were to love flattery, and how we could hide from ourselves our own defects, and how fond we were of comparing ourselves, not with the standard of duty His Word presents, or with the high example Jesus has given to us, but with our sinful and erring fellow-creatures. He has seen how little there has been, in the past year, of heartfelt contrition before God. We knew it was just ; but pride has still lived on, or seemed to *luxuriate* in these perverse hearts of ours.

And if, my brethren, contrition was due, how should that contrition have naturally been expressed ? What ought to have been the use we made, in the past year, of those different methods of improvement, which God has by His commands suggested, and by His providence afforded ? The psalmist could say—“Oh ! how I love Thy law ! it is my meditation all the day ;” and the prophet could say—“Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart ;” and the apostle could say—“Let the Word of God dwell in you richly, in all wisdom.” How have *we* used the Word of God ? How much, in the last year, have we taken “the sword of the Spirit,” and sharpened its edge for the “good fight” against sin within us, and sin around us ? How many hours of the past year have we given, not to distracted and careless reading of an appointed portion, not to a passive listening to any exposition of it, not to a studious research into its meaning, (which an ungodly and unconverted person can do,) but how much of the past year have the children of God in this congregation given to devout reflection on their Father’s words to them—on the directions He gave, and the truths He commanded to their faith ? How much have we meditated with joy and delight on the message of our Father’s love to us, conveyed by His Word ? Alas ! alas ! very, very few even of those hours that we have spent in reading the Bible, could be characterised thus. And yet we knew it was right.

And was it not but a natural and simple method to take, if we were sorry for our grievous defects before God, and knew that He had said so often and so plainly He would answer prayer, that we should comply with so many directions in His Word ?—directions like these : “Con-

time instant in prayer;" "in every thing by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God;" "pray without ceasing;" "praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit." Was not this right? Was not this the simple method, which earnest men would have pursued, for their acknowledged defects?—defects, which we knew to be condemned. But how many hours in the past year have been given, not to the prayers of a wandering mind, filled full of earthly thoughts, dragging its attention back again and again with the greatest difficulty for a few moments to spiritual thought,—but how many hours have been spent in such fervency of supplication as Jacob knew, when he wrestled that night with God, and obtained the name of Israel? How many such hours of earnest, believing, persevering prayer has God Almighty witnessed, for those blessings so valuable, so essential to the just fulfilment of our duty, or the enjoyment of our many privileges, as the children of God? Why, brethren, God has seen, that in our hours of prayer we have offended Him; by much wandering thought, much wandering purpose, perhaps even a want of sincerity often in the language that we have used, and almost none of that fervent, earnest longing for blessings, and desire to grow in wisdom, grace and devotedness, which might have made us, by this period of our Christian profession, far wiser, far stronger believers, than we are at present.

Thus have we acted towards God. These have been our tempers, and this our conduct, towards our Maker, Preserver, Benefactor, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, through the course of the past year.

II. Might we not, my brethren, have expected, with such conduct, that God might have withdrawn from us the blessings of His providence, and withheld from us the communications of His Spirit, and permitted us to find the means of grace profitless, and left our temptations to multiply, and suffered us to sink into a state of fixed backsliding?—and then, with our hearts at last sinking into too natural depression, might we not have seemed to hear Him saying to us this day, "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts?"

But what has He done? Instead of taking from us our providential mercies, many of us look back on twelve months

of continued mercy. Still has He preserved our health, and given us the use of our faculties. Still our friends are kind. We have not to deplore bereavement in our nearest circle of friendships. We have been rejoicing in happy homes; and hope has not withered; for all through this year, God has been loading us with His providential favours. So that we may say, with at least as much of admiration as the psalmist would express it—"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

He might have withdrawn His Holy Spirit. It was just, to those who were so ungrateful as we have been, that we should not have the supplies of grace, to quicken our gratitude, and make us delight in Him, and teach us still to trust, and make hope grow stronger. But He has not withdrawn His grace. Though we have been so defective, yet we have loved Him still; we have trusted in Him; we have committed ourselves again and again to His gracious care; we have still wished to serve Him and to please Him; we have indulged in blessed hopes for the long eternity; we have felt His peace in our hearts. God has thus by His grace favoured us, even more than by His providence. Surely, when we recal it, we may say with growing gratitude—"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

Yes, brethren, He might have done towards us what He has done towards many. He might have suffered us, for our many faults, to find the means of grace unprofitable. We might have gone to the Word of God for instruction, and found it a dead letter. We might have knelt down for prayer, and found the spirit of prayer wanting. We might have gone to the Lord's table without refreshment and without faith. We might have found public and private means leave us just as unprofitable and cold-hearted as before. But instead of that, God has made His Word to His children here, I doubt not, often in the past year, sweet and instructive too; and they have not lived without prayer, even though they have not tried all its power; and they have found His house sometimes refresh their spirits, and sometimes reprove their dulness; and they have found it a pleasant thing to join with His people at His table, and there to confess His name. He has not made the means of grace unprofitable—though alas! we have not used them as we ought. And when we contrast our conduct with His, we may well say—"He hath not dealt with us

after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

He might, brethren, have permitted temptations to multiply, and allowed us to sink into a state of fixed backsliding. But I trust it is true of many of His children here, that temptations have been progressively overcome, and that this day they are not worse than they were in this time of the year before. Nay, perhaps they have found some little strength increased; some little increase of life; more extensive and more heart-affecting views of God in Christ. And perhaps they are a little nearer towards heaven; and hope is a little brighter and stronger than it was; and their faces are Zionward still; so that they are rejoicing in God, more than they were last year. If this be your happy case, my Christian friends, with what admiration and gratitude to God ought you to join with the psalmist in saying—"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities!"

And thus, instead of letting you sink in depression, and this day be doubting whether you shall ever overcome the obstacles in the way to heaven, and trembling lest after all you should be cast away, perhaps many of His people here find their hopes firmer than they were; perhaps they have more joy and peace in believing, than they ever yet knew. And if so, such a return for such ingratitude, so much mercy in God following so much defect in us—oh! how it ought to make us exclaim, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities!"

Perhaps, my dear brethren, there may be some in this congregation, who are obliged to call up recollections of a very different character. Perhaps, some among you have to think with yourselves, and do think—there may be some such here, who have to say to themselves, with something of sadness and regret I doubt not it *must* be—"Three hundred and sixty-five more days I have refused to turn to God through Christ; three hundred and sixty-five more days of this fugitive life, I have chosen to live in rebellion against my Maker, my Monarch, and my Saviour." Perhaps they may think with themselves, that they have done this though they have had many convictions, that it was neither safe nor proper.

'And yet,' may they add—"yet God has not cut me off; the barren fig-tree has not been doomed at once; still it remains, cumbering the ground. I am yet in the house of God; I have yet the opportunity of prayer; still are mercies pursuing me; still are invitations addressed to me." Oh! that this thought might at length penetrate the most careless; and that the goodness of God might do for you, my dear hearer, what hitherto nothing has effected, and lead you this night to commit yourselves to His mercy through Christ, and to enter upon His service with heartfelt decision and devotedness.

But you, my brethren, who have been able thus to reflect upon the past, and to contrast your defects with the mercies of God, which have still surpassed them all; I am sure you must feel, that the proper temper in which we should close this year, is one of deep humiliation. We should take pleasure in lying low before God, and acknowledging our many defects and our many departures from Him. Yet at the same time should those defects, when rising before our imagination, only render more precious to us that blessed Gospel, in which we have believed. Again let us apply to "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Again let us come, not with timidity, but boldness, to the throne of grace, because Christ merits our acceptance—Christ's mediation secures it; and laying down the whole burden of guilt before His cross, bless our covenant-keeping God, that He has given us such access to Him, and commit ourselves once more to His care. And oh! how ought gratitude to God to mingle with self-abhorrence! And how much should the review of the past bid us delight in Him, "to whom," if "confusion of face" belongeth to us, "mercies and forgivenesses belong, though we have rebelled against Him!" Oh! may He quicken us to this gratitude, and lead us to spend the next year in lowliness and in love to Him.

There are other reflections that would naturally arise from this review, and, if it please God, we will recur to these on the morrow: when may He grant us again His presence and blessing, and enable us to begin the new year in faith and in hope.

RESOLUTIONS MADE, AND STRENGTH INVOKED,
FOR A YEAR OF DUTY.

A SERMON,
BY THE HON. AND REV. BAPTIST W. NOEL, M.A.
PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW, ON WEDNESDAY EVENING,
JANUARY 1, 1846.

His annual New-Year's-Day Sermon.

"Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on Thee."—Psalm xxv. 21.

It, in referring to the past year, we contrast the obligations which were laid upon us to love and serve and glorify God, with our actual temper and conduct, we find reason for humiliation before God. And if we further contrast what our conduct merited from Him, and the distress and trouble into which He might justly have sentenced us to fall, with the actual blessings, temporal and spiritual, which He has poured out upon us, we find at least equal cause for gratitude.

If, then, the memory of the past year has awakened in us humility and gratitude, what should these same dispositions prompt us to do, when we turn to the anticipation of the year now beginning? If we are really humbled in the memory of past offences, and grateful to God for all that He has done for us in the past year, what should we resolve with respect to this future year? What ought to be the prevailing desire of our minds?

Surely we must feel that it is expressed by such commands as these, which are given to us in the Word of God: "Grow in grace;" "this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more, in knowledge and in all judgment;" "as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye should abound more and more." The example of the apostle Paul must seem to us most suitable, if we are humble and grateful, when he says—"I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Surely any real humility in the recollection of past defects must prompt this desire to amend for the future; any real gratitude to God for unmerited mercies must make us thus desire to glorify Him more. Surely, then, this is the temper in which every real Christian in this congregation is found at the beginning of this new year: a desire throughout it to "grow in grace," and in

all the fruits of grace, manifested in Christian tempers and in Christian conduct.

But if this is our desire, we naturally ask, how may we realise it? how may we secure this progress? For we have many difficulties; we are exposed to many dangers; we have spent many years, in which we could find little progress or none; perhaps we can recal years, in which we have decidedly lost strength, wisdom, and grace. If this be the desire, which humble gratitude to God awakens in us, how may we actually secure this blessing all through the year to come?

Now the text gives us a most instructive reply to that question. It expresses precisely the tempers, in which we should seek this improvement. If the psalmist was looking for this deliverance from evil which we desire, the psalmist was looking for this happiness which we wish for; and desiring it, he made this request to God—"Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on Thee."

Here the first disposition essentially requisite to our success, is said to be "integrity and uprightness." For the psalmist, as inspired by the Spirit, says, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me;" by that he was to be preserved, and not by anything else. And the very petition implies that he would be sincere and upright towards God; for he could not expect to be preserved, unless he were sincere and upright. "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me;" then he meant to be sincere and upright continually before God. This he expresses in other places, not uncommonly; if you look at the eleventh verse of the next Psalm, he expresses it thus—"As for me, I will walk in mine integrity." The same resolution is implied in our text: "let integrity and uprightness preserve me;" then, "I will walk in mine integrity." It was a resolution he formed, that he would be upright and sincere before God, and then he asked that that uprightness and sincerity might "preserve him."

Now what are those habits, or rather, with reference to the present time, what are those resolutions, which integrity and uprightness towards God imply? If we are upright and sincere before God, what must be the resolutions which we form for this new year?

It must be plain to us all, that we cannot be sincere and upright in our intentions to serve and to please God, unless we resolve that we will correct our known faults. We cannot be heartily desirous to please and serve Him, if we mean to let the same faults prevail, which have hitherto disfigured perhaps our Christian profession. Sincerity and uprightness must imply, that we shall count no fault too insignificant to be noticed by us, and none too obstinate to be overcome. The whole amount of them, every discovered or discoverable fault, as marked not by the fashions of the world, not by the animadversions of our Christian brethren, but by the Word of God, searched earnestly by us for knowledge—these are the faults, which, if we are sincere and upright in our intentions to please and serve God, we must now resolve that we will conquer in the year to come.

Further, if we are sincere and upright before God, obviously we must intend to cherish, by all the means in our power, those dispositions towards Him which He approves. Remembering how defective we have been in the past time in these dispositions, we must mean, for the year to come, that we should love our Creator more, that we should trust Him more completely, that we should have more submission to His will, that we should desire to obey Him more uniformly and zealously, and that we should wish to cultivate a spirit of devotedness to Him. This must be our intention, if we can say that we are sincere and upright before Him.

It must be obvious, that if we have this sincerity and uprightness, we must be desirous, that in the year which is now opening upon us, we should fulfil our duty better than we have fulfilled it; that there should be much more diligence, and conscientiousness, and thoughtfulness and resolution, in our fulfilment of the known will of God; that we should carry our examination of His will into every particular of our lives, and take care that our habits be such as the Word of God recommends, and as God himself approves. That is the least, that sincerity and uprightness must involve.

And if we are sincere and upright in our intentions to serve and please God, we must mean to do, in this next year, all the good we can. It must be our meaning

and intention, that we should both seek good from all the events of life ourselves, and likewise endeavour to be useful to our Christian friends; to promote their spirituality and piety; by all the means in our power to help them forward in their Christian course. It must be our wish to convert, and our intention to strive to convert, those who are irreligious and ungodly; and to make occasions for the endeavour to do them good. This we know to be pleasing to God; and if we are sincere and upright in our intentions to please Him, these habits are involved in that sincerity.

It must surely, if we are sincere and upright, be our meaning and purpose, to use the different means of improvement God has given to us, more diligently, more seriously, more like men in earnest, than we have done. The recollection of past defects on this head would be fruitless, and the humiliation on this account insincere, if it did not prompt us to such a resolution for the future. We can give our minds more to the Word of God; we can throw more energy and thoughtfulness into prayer; we can watch more respecting the various dangers and wants, which we have to bring before God in prayer; and if we are sincere and upright, it must be our intention to bring them all before Him in prayer, and to try in this year what the force of the promises is, what blessings we may obtain by such secret prayer as it is in our power to make. We must mean, that the Sabbath day should be more useful to us than it has been, and that we should come to the table of the Lord with more suitable dispositions, and that in all the methods of improvement which we use, by the opportunity His providence affords, or under the direct command of His Word, we should use that thoughtfulness and energy, which may bring a blessing to us in the use of them.

I am persuaded, every one here must see, that sincerity and uprightness before God, such as the psalmist asked might be his preservation for the future, imply at least these among other things—these among other resolutions formed now. And if such resolutions are wanting, is it not most plain, that any dependence we may feel on God to bless us would be misplaced?—not because He is unwilling to bless, but because we should be in a temper of mind, that He has not promised to bless. God has never promised to bless those, that are not found in the way of duty. We have no warrant to ask His blessing, so long as we are resolving to do what is wrong, or (what is nearly the

same thing,) yielding to that vacillation of mind, in which we have no resolution to do what is right; running heedlessly into temptation, careless what the result of temptation is, and letting ourselves float idly down the stream of occurrences, as though we had no conflict to maintain, no difficulties to surmount, no improvement of character to attain. We cannot look for God's blessing; *we* look for it would be presumptuous.

There is a most instructive illustration of this state of mind, in the history of the Israelites, which on so many occasions furnishes to us the pattern both of God's dealings towards us, and of our tendencies and dispositions towards Him. The Israelites were summoned to invade and take possession of Canaan; that was the path of duty, and if they had then had the "integrity and uprightness" of David, they would at once have proceeded to fulfil God's command, in dependence on His power and care; and then that power and care would have blessed them. But they refused to enter into Canaan; they were afraid of its warlike inhabitants, and turned back again in timid cowardice. And when for this they were threatened, that they should wander forty years more in the desert which they began to abhor, then they said—"We will go up;" 'we will attack these Amalekites; we will depend upon the care of God to give us now the victory, though we distrusted before.' But now God had forbidden it; they were no longer in the way of duty; and dependence upon Him in such circumstances was not faith, but presumption. And so it was treated; and they were chased and driven from the fastness which they sought to attack, and returned in sorrow and humiliation, to enter once more the wilderness, where their bones were to lie and bleach. And so, brethren, if we have no resolution to serve God, such as "integrity and uprightness" give, then *we* were to look for God's blessing through the next year, it would be presumption merely. We shall be certain, if we do not form these resolutions, to meet with disappointment and defeat. Are there any in this congregation, that feel they cannot form them—they do not form them—they have no resolution to subdue their faults, no resolution to cherish the gracious dispositions that ought to be in lively exercise, no resolution to serve and obey God unreservedly, no resolution to be useful to their fellow-men, no resolution to use the means of grace with earnestness and faith? Then, my dear brethren, depend upon it, you are preparing for yourselves

nothing but disappointment in the year to come; nothing but failure and defeat; The probability is, that unless something brings you to this state of mind you have not now, you will be inconsistent with your profession; that you will fall into sin; that you will manifest religious weakness; that you will lose spiritual comfort. And all the means of grace may grow unprofitable; and perhaps, at the close of this year, you may have to lament a large and deep declension of heart and soul.

So, brethren, if we should ask the blessing of God upon the Church to which we belong, but at the same time have no "integrity and uprightness" in the duties, which our relation to that Church involved, how could we expect His blessing in answer to our prayers? We are summoned by some of our brethren at this time, to unite in prayer for the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit; and there can be nothing better, nothing more necessary, nothing sweeter to the Christian's desire, than this very supplication. But suppose we see mischiefs in our Church, against which we do not protest; suppose we see things done in that Church, which dishonour God, and we make no efforts to remove them; suppose we see a schismatical and sectarian spirit, separating the members of that Church from God's faithful followers in other denominations, and we take no means whatever to secure the unity Christ has commanded. Why, if we are cold and silent, and do nothing to protest, nothing to aim at any improvement in this and a hundred other particulars calling for reform and amendment, how can we ask for the outpouring of God's Spirit? We cannot say, "Let integrity and uprightness" bring a blessing on our Church; we are not manifesting integrity and uprightness. And for my own part, I am persuaded, the blessing so often asked has been greatly restricted by this very thing, that while we have asked for the Spirit of God to come down, we have not sought His blessing in the way He has prescribed, and have not been striving to promote the spiritual welfare of our Church, as the circumstances of our day demanded.

Or if we ask that the blessing of God may descend upon our country, that religion may thrive, that there may be a great increase of godliness; and then look round upon tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, without exaggeration, ascertained in this very metropolis to be living without any religious habits and without any instruction, and we do nothing, or next to nothing, to bring the Gospel to their doors,

or to make them know that there is a Saviour, who has died to rescue them; how can we pray, that His Spirit may descend on our country, and the Word of the Lord "run and be glorified?" If there are hundreds of parishes, (perhaps larger numbers might be mentioned,) in which the Gospel of Christ is not faithfully preached, and we do nothing to bring the Gospel to these untaught millions; if the large masses of population are gathering annually into our great manufacturing towns, and whole districts are becoming one united town, and we see them perishing without knowledge, what will prayer do to bring down the blessing of God?—the prayer of those who are idle; the prayer of those who are insincere; the prayer of those who are not courageous in the Lord's service, and are doing nothing to bring down that blessing upon our country, which we seem to ask by our supplications.

The passage before us shows, that the preliminary to success in prayer is to do the will of God, as far as we know it. "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him," says the apostle John, "because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." If we know what is right to be done, and do it not, and consent not to do it, then must we be met, whenever we attempt to pray for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, by this statement of the psalmist—"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." If I am consenting to those things that are wrong, and taking no measures to remove them, then God will not hear the prayers, which come from that unfaithful, unbelieving, insincere heart.

Thus, whether we refer to public or to private blessings, we see how "integrity and uprightness" are essential to our religious progress.

Yet is there not something proud and bold in such resolutions as these? Can we say without presumption, "As for me, I will walk in mine integrity?"—*"I will conquer my faults, I will cherish each godly disposition, I will unreservedly obey my Maker's will, I will endeavour to be useful to my fellow-men, I will use earnestly the various means of improvement God has given!"* Is there not something of presumption in this? and would it not argue very little self-acquaintance, to make such resolutions, especially in those who remember how often such resolutions have failed; who look back with so much humiliation to past disappointments; who think how long years have passed away, leaving us still ignorant and weak?

We have some instances, in the Scripture, of resolutions that were very fruitless. When the Lord entered into covenant with His people Israel, and set before them His wise and good commands, we read that all the people with one consent exclaimed—"All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient." God had then with His own voice said, amidst the thunders and the flame of Mount Sinai, so that the earth trembled and their hearts quaked at the sight—"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them." And yet, within six weeks, these very men were dancing and singing round their idol calf. What was the use of resolutions, to pass away like the early dew—like the vapour of a summer morning? Or if we look to the New Testament, in the hour of our blessed Lord's deep trouble, we find one of His disciples bold and confident, and sincerely resolute, and he said—"Though all men should be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." "though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." And good reason had he never to deny Jesus. He had heard His words; he had shared His friendship; he had witnessed His splendid miracles; he had been gifted with a power of working miracles by Jesus himself; he had seen Him more glorious than the sun; lately he had seen Him surpassing the midday sun in splendour; good reason had he never to deny Him. Yet that very night did that good man, that sincere man, deny the Lord Jesus Christ, perjure himself by denying Him with an oath, and then utter execrations and curses to convince the bystanders of the truth of his lie. What are human resolutions! That was a pious man, and a man of undoubted courage; a man who, when he stood alone before an armed throng, was so excited by the indignities with which he saw them treat his Master, that he drew his sword, and though it was likely he would be cut down on the spot, almost destroyed on the instant, the life of one of his persecutors. Yet his good resolutions all failed; and that very night he denied his Lord with oaths and curses. Is it not pride, then, in us, to make such resolutions? Are we better than Peter? Perhaps we are neither naturally more courageous, nor more advanced in piety; how should we say for a moment—"I will walk in mine integrity?" And may not the past tell us still more affectingly how soon such resolutions wither and fade away in the first sun of temptation?

Surely the wrecks of many a fair hope in past years may tell us, it is not wise to depend upon ourselves. How should we say—"As for me, I will walk in mine integrity?"

The psalmist tells us how; for he adds in the text—"Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, *for I wait on Thee.*" 'I look to Thee to sustain that integrity, I look to Thee to bless it; without Thee I can neither continue upright, nor secure a blessing from uprightness.'

"I wait on Thee." It is the providence of God, which must, according to His sovereign will, supply us with all those influences from without, which may do us good in the year now to come; and it is the grace of God, which He gives still as a sovereign, that must enable us to profit by any external advantages. Grace and providence must do all; God must do all. It is God, who must help us to conquer even the least fault; it is He, by whose Spirit alone we can attain the least improvement, in one of the most congenial and the most sweet of Christian dispositions; it is God, who alone can help us to walk with any measure of steadfastness in the path of obedience. He—He only can either prompt us to do good, or make us useful when we attempt it; and He—He only—can help us to use His Word, or to approach the throne of grace in such a manner, as to bring from these great, inestimable privileges that harvest of blessings which we seek. Grace must do all; God must do all this. And if we make that resolution except in simple and humble dependence on grace, we may be sure, from the examples of many who have been presuming *lous*, from our experience of the past, from the assurances of God's Word, from all we know of ourselves and all we read of Him, that nothing awaits us but disappointment and loss and shame. And therefore, if we say, as we think of the year to come, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me;" let it be with this addition always—"for I wait on Thee."

Now if, my brethren, we unite the dependence on God with that resolution to serve Him; if we depend on Him to bless us, not in idleness, but activity,—not in hesitation, but in resolution to serve Him; if, feeling the resolution now, we ask Him to sustain it, and seek His blessing in the way of obedience, and not out of it; then He has given us many gracious assurances, all of which must prove true. We might expect, when we think of past failures, nothing but mortification, and shame and despondency still; but He has said—"They shall not

be ashamed, that wait on Me;" wait on Him, and you will never be disappointed. "Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption." Nay, He has not only assured us we shall not be ashamed, but He has told us we may triumph in this combined feeling. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;" they shall persevere, year after year, in God's ways—in all those tempers and dispositions, so contrary to corrupt nature, so congenial to the world we are hastening to; "they shall mount up with wings, as eagles;" with an eye that never is dazzled, they shall look towards the glorious truths, which open upon them with fresh radiance, and with a wing that never tires mount up towards their heavenly home. God has promised it, and He will do it; and they that wait on Him, shall thus triumph over all the obstacles in the way of their spiritual progress, which the world, the flesh and the devil can together present.

Hence, this is the very temper, which humility and gratitude, in the recollection of our past defects, and recalling God's mercies, ought to prompt us to cherish. Do not let us expect the blessing of God, if we are not sincere and simple-hearted before Him; do not let us look for any blessing from the independent exertions, to which present sincerity and uprightness may prompt us; but remembering that God is wont by His grace to bless His children's efforts, and encourage them in each effort, and never to supersede or render them unnecessary, let us both now resolve on the formation and maintenance of these various habits, and cast ourselves humbly upon His grace for the accomplishment of our desires:

These three things, it is reasonable, it is scriptural, it is agreeable to God's will, that we should feel on entering the new year, if we have become the disciples of Christ. It is reasonable, that we should begin it with earnest resolution. Nothing will be accomplished by us without it. If we are wavering, undecided, have not marked our course, do not know what we mean to do, have no fixed mind respecting our duties; then, depend upon it, this will be a year of trouble to us. But if, on the other hand, recollecting that the Christian life is most justly described in Scripture as a warfare, a constant struggle with ourselves, with the evil that abounds in the world, and the untiring malice of the devil, we enter upon that conflict in another year with the resolution of soldiers, who are determined to conquer in the war, we may look for a blessing. If,

while we turn our eyes to our heavenly home, which glows in its celestial radiance in the distance, we enter upon this stage of our journey with the resolution of travellers, who know there is many a steep ascent, and many a rugged region to be crossed, and many difficulties which must be broken through, and many temptations to lie down in soft indulgence, but who mean to persevere till they reach their home, then we may expect that God will bless us through this year. Like Christian soldiers that are faithful, like Christian travellers that are in earnest, like those who mean to conquer and are resolved to reach their home, let us enter on this new year. Earnest resolution is the temper God asks for; let us cherish it.

It is right, in the next place, that we should enter upon it with humble dependence. We merit nothing, and our neglect may bring upon us just chastisements; but still, God is faithful and gracious. He has given us a wish to serve and please Him; He will not let that wish expire. It is not our strength, which must secure us victory, or help us to reach our home; but it is His. We not only fight under His eye, we not only travel under His guidance; but it is His own gracious Spirit, that animates us with the strength we feel, and gives us the courage which is necessary. Our dependence ought to be humble, for we have much sin; we try His patience daily. It ought to be humble, for we merit—we have merited—and shall merit often still—that He should abandon us to our folly. But yet it should be a filial confidence; and we should expect, if we are Christ's followers, that He will not leave us nor forsake us. He has promised it, and will never forget it. All that we can want is promised to Christ's merits; and we are encouraged by Him to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Casting ourselves on a mercy that has never failed us yet, and looking to a righteousness all-sufficient to win us grace here and glory in heaven; thus let us enter on this new year in humble dependence upon God.

And then, if we have this resolution given by Him, and this dependence on Him, it is right that we should have a humble courage, in entering on the year that now opens upon us. We have no reason to be disheartened. It is true, we

are at once ignorant and feeble, exposed to many temptations, and in danger of halting every day; but He who "has begun a good work," will not leave it unfinished. He loves us now; He pities all our weaknesses; by His own grace has He set our face Zionward; we are looking for a glory to be revealed; we are looking with expectation to that day, when we shall see our blessed Saviour face to face; and He who has given us this, will not leave us to perish. With humble courage, with earnest, serious courage, let us enter on this new year; and by the help of God, it may be a year of peace and spiritual progress.

I am much grieved for that portion of this congregation, of whom I cannot but think, with sorrow, that they have no part or lot in these reflections; that they are conscious they have no religious integrity, never yet turned to God, and therefore cannot depend upon Him. God's attributes are in array *against* them; God's promises have not been made to them; they never yet tasted His grace; how can they rely on Him, whom they daily wrong? how plead the merit of a Saviour, they have never trusted? Alas! they have no part or lot in these reflections; and if they were serious, I am persuaded, this year would look very gloomy to them in their present condition.

All that we can do, brethren, is, to pray for you. And I earnestly request those, who have tasted that God is gracious, and know the blessedness of the Christian life, that they would make it a matter of conscience, very often, both alone and in their families, to pray for those their fellow-worshippers here, at least who assemble with them for worship, join with them in the same prayer and in the same hymn, and listen to the same exposition of God's Word, and yet have no part nor lot as yet in the covenant of grace—pray that the Lord may reach their hearts. And if we ask Him thus to have mercy on ourselves and on them, who can tell whether this new year may not bring with it to ourselves individually, and to us as a congregation, greater blessings than we have ever yet experienced? We are "not straitened in Him;" He is a most merciful Benefactor; and perhaps we may experience that His blessings surpass all our hopes.

A PATTERN OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. HUGH M'NEILE, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. JUDE'S CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
DECEMBER 22, 1844.

For the benefit of the Liverpool Southern Hospital.

"I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."—2 Corinthians viii. 8, 9.

My brethren, on ordinary occasions I have but one only object in addressing you from this place, namely, to explain, or apply, in some one of their branches, the doctrine, or experience, or practice, or prophecies, of the glorious Gospel of the grace of God. But on the present occasion, I have, as you are already aware, another special object in view, the advocacy of the Southern Hospital, in this town—which yet is, indeed, not another object, but, if rightly understood, is a legitimate result from one part of the glorious Gospel.

The Gospel of Christ announces a rich collection of blessings bestowed freely upon fallen man, by the grace of God. All these blessings are treasured up in Christ himself; and when a man is united to Christ, or as the Scriptures express it, when he is "born again," "created anew," "quickened from death into life"—when that vital change, however it may be expressed, has really taken place upon a man, then all these blessings are his. He has the sacrifice of the blood of Christ, to make a full-sufficient atonement for his sins, he may draw nigh to a holy God. He has Christ's obedience unto death, imputed to him for righteousness, that he may stand complete, without spot or blemish, in all the will of God. He has Christ's example, to direct and guide him in his feelings and conduct towards both God and man. He has Christ's Spirit, to comfort, to cheer, to sanctify him in all his distresses and adversities, whensoever they may oppress him. He has Christ's resurrection, to animate him with a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance. He has Christ's intercession, to secure daily the gracious acceptance of his person, his prayers, his services. He has the sure promise of the second coming of Christ, to the final accomplishment, both in body and soul, of his perfected salvation, in the likeness of his Lord, to the glory of God the Fa-

ther. These are the leading items in that grand account, the sum-total of which St. Paul calls "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Now to every one among you, who really believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, what He is, what He has done, is doing, and will do, it may be truly said, all these blessings are yours. There is no middle path; either none of these blessings are yours, or all these blessings are yours.

You all say, that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; you have all joined, either in express word, or by tacit consent, (for this is nothing more than your presence here implies,) in the successive declarations of the Creed, and you have ratified them all by a simultaneous Amen. I take you at your word. It is no part of my present purpose to excite suspicion, or to attempt to detect counterfeits. I frankly receive your profession as honest and true; and instead of questioning its sincerity, and so throwing you back to a fresh examination of it, I receive it and hail it as genuine, and invite you to go forward to a cheerful and liberal production of its genuine results.

For this purpose, I call your attention to the example of Christ, as here set forth by the inspired apostle, for our admiration and imitation. "Ye know," he says, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"—His tender compassion towards fallen, helpless, sinners; His active love, His bountiful goodness: "that though He was rich"—rich in the possession of all the glory, purity, sufficiency and felicity of the Godhead—"yet for your sakes He became poor"—He emptied Himself—"He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself"—to hunger, thirst, and pain, and shame. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man had not where to

lay His head." And in this self-denying compassion, He persevered unto death, "even the death of the cross:" "that through His poverty"—thus experienced to the extremity of destitution—"ye might be rich," in the possession of all the richest blessings of everlasting salvation.

Let me first call your attention to the terms of this sentence, as it expresses to us Christian doctrine. It is plain from this, that the apostle's view, that is, the true view of our Lord's person is, that He "was rich" *before* "He became poor"—"Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor." Satisfy yourselves that this is the view of St. Paul—that Christ was "rich" before He became "poor." This is more important than it may seem at first sight. In His humanity, from the very first He was poor. Born in a stable, cradled in a manger, brought up in the house and family and shop of a tradesman; through His whole history on earth, in human nature, He was poor. How, then, was He "rich" before He became "poor?" This question involves no difficulty to us who believe, though we cannot understand, and hold it a reasonable thing too on such a subject—to us who believe His Divine nature, for there we see His antecedent riches, which He laid aside, that He might become "poor." But to those persons, who, while they receive the Scriptures as inspired of God, do nevertheless, deny the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, this passage seems to involve an inextricable difficulty; for how do they say He was "rich" before He became "poor?" I am aware that many such persons enlarge with much eloquence on the riches and glory and dignity of Christ after His resurrection from the dead; but this does not meet the case—for that is being rich *after* He was poor. The apostle says, He was rich *before* He became poor. "Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding." Right understanding in a communication from God is an understanding satisfied of the authenticity of the communication, and bowing before the contents of the communication.

Now, consider the context in which this passage occurs, and the practical use which the apostle makes of it. He was making collections in the Churches for the poor saints at Jerusalem. He had succeeded in many of the Churches of Macedonia; and he introduces the subject to the Corinthians, by telling them of the liberality of their Macedonian neighbours. He

enlarges with much admiration on the extent of that liberality, not that the Corinthians might thereupon excuse themselves, saying, that as so much had been already done, it was unnecessary for them to make painful sacrifices in order to do more—no, not so, but on the contrary, that the Corinthians, emulating the noble example of their neighbours in Macedonia, the Churches at Philippi, and Thessalonica, and Berea, should be quickened to run in the same noble course, following an example every way so well worthy of Christian imitation. This is his object in the opening of the chapter. "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia." This quaint expression, "we do you to wit," is the translation here introduced of a word, which in other parts of Scripture is plainly translated by "inform" or "make known." "We make known to you"—it means nothing else. It is an old English expression, the simple meaning of which is, "We make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia." Now what he was about to inform them of, concerning the Churches of Macedonia, was their great generosity towards their poor Christian brethren. But instead of calling this an excellency of theirs, he calls it a "grace of God bestowed" upon them. We must not lose sight of this, because it directs us to the true scriptural source of Christian compassion. Christian compassion is not any part of the human nature. It is not to be found in any region of the fallen world; there is no compartment of the natural heart of man, in which Christian compassion can originate. It must come from heaven, or it will never be felt or exercised upon earth. Hence you find the apostle, when he would commend the Christian generosity of the Macedonian Churches, calling it the grace of God bestowed upon them. "We make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Their liberality, considered in its motive, must be traced to the abundance of their Christian joy; and in its extent it contrasted remarkably with their deep poverty. And notice, the abundance of their joy, even in the midst of their present temporal affliction. The joy of the Lord is the Christian's strength; the abundance of his joy is the abundance of his power to do the service of his God. Whence the abundance of the Christian's joy, but from the

assurance of the Christian's blessing? There is no abounding joy in a religion that rises but to a peradventure of blessing: but in proportion as the blessing is certain, the joy in it abounds. It is the right privilege of every member of Christ to have assurance of his membership, and therein to joy in the Lord. "The voice of joy and thanksgiving is in the tabernacles of the righteous." "It is a good thing to give thanks." "Oh! come and let us sing unto the Lord." But how so? If our religion be but a hesitation,—if it be but a doubt, if it be but a peradventure, if assurance of salvation be a dangerous presumption—how shall we have abundance of joy? And without abundance of joy there is not power to serve Him aright. There may be other motives in a man's own natural disposition, or in the customs of society, urging a man to obedience; but in order to be service of God, it must spring from abundance of joy. So it was with the Macedonians. The abundance of their joy led to great liberality, though they were in deep poverty at the time. So that, the apostle says—"For to their power, (I bear record,) yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift." Instead of waiting to be urged by the apostle, they entreated him to receive their gift. They were so forward to offer, that he had not to plead but only to receive. "Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon ourselves the fellowship of ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped"—not because we desired it; "but first gave th^r own selves to the Lord." They did it not at our entreaty, as a matter of mere temporary excitement; but they did it as the result of their own self-devotion to the Lord before hand. It was the genuine produce of now created trees. The trees had been made good planted in the Lord, and thus their fruits were good. "And unto us," (they gave themselves,) to us "by the will of God," as the instruments made use of and sent to them—with the glorious message of the grace of God. "Inasmuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also." The Macedonians had gone so far in this noble example of Christian generosity, that Paul sends Titus to Corinth, that the Corinthian Church might not be behind hand. Titus had been there before, and had made a commencement; and he sent him back again for this purpose. "Therefore as ye abound in everything,

in faith and utterance and knowledge, and in all diligence and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also;" of generosity and charity to their poor suffering brethren. "I speak not by commandment;" I have no special revelation by which I can press upon you to send a collection to the poor saints at Jerusalem—this is not a direct matter of command from God, but only derived out of the great principles laid down in the Gospel. "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others," who, in other places, have manifested this glorious grace—that ye should not be behind hand; "and to prove the sincerity of your love." "To prove the sincerity of your love." You may know yourselves that your love is sincere without such proof; but how are others to know it, who cannot see your hearts? And how is the principle to remain in your hearts if it be not exercised, as He who gave it commands that it should be exercised? In order therefore to prove it to others, and in order to strengthen it in yourselves, exercise it. "Prove the sincerity of your love."

This would also prove their conformity to the character of Christ; for he adds—"for ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"—ye know how He proved the sincerity of His love. It was not merely by wishing, however sincerely, the good of men, nor by praying, however earnestly, for their happiness; nor by giving them only what He could spare, without interfering with His own comfort. No, He proved the sincerity of His love by giving up all that was most valuable, most delightful to Himself, and by voluntarily enduring for their sakes pain and sorrow, and suffering and death; and so ardent was His love, so animated His compassion, so satisfying to His holy soul was His self-devotion for others, that sorrow was turned into joy, and "for the joy that was set before him He endured the cross, despising the shame."

And is it possible, my brethren—is it possible that this self-denying charity—this self-exhausting liberality, this willing self-devotion to the good of others which marked the steps of Him—is it possible that these are held forth for our imitation? Nothing less. My dear brethren, it is "looking unto Jesus" that we see at once the motive and the measure of the Christian beneficence we are called to. The love of Christ constrains us to love, and the example of Christ directs us how to prove the sincerity of that love.

Oh! how amazing is God's grace to us in

Christ, thus to strike the rock of our hard selfish hearts, and bid streams of benevolence flow forth, to satisfy the wants of our fellow-creatures! And how amazing is the beauty, the glory, the nobility of the true Christian's position, to be an imitator of God, can almoner for God, a good steward of the manifold grace of God—a representative on earth of the deep feeling, the active compassion, the expansive beneficence of all Deity! The Son of God gave Himself to spend and be spent for you, and He did it cheerfully. O ye sons of God, ye new-born heirs of glory! so Jesus Christ set an example that ye should follow His steps. "Freely ye have received, freely give;" "not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver."

Thus it was that the apostle Paul made use of the Gospel, when pleading for a large donation in aid of his suffering fellow-creatures; and thus it is, my dear friends, that I would endeavour to use the same Gospel, pleading to you this day for a large donation in aid of our poor fellow-townsmen, who in their daily work are exposed to such fracturing calamities, that for their prompt and proper relief such institutions as the hospital I advocate are absolutely indispensable.

The extent to which the services of such an Institution are required, will be best seen by the fact, that notwithstanding all that has been done in the Northern Hospital, and in other parts of the town, during the short period since this Southern Hospital has been opened, there have been 4,249 cases under treatment in it, 4,249 cases! These words are easily spoken, easily listened to, easily understood in the letter of them. Dear brethren, listen; think for a moment, and endeavour to exercise sympathy with the broken-boned objects, whose cause I advocate this day. The words are used "broken-boned:" the words sound in the air; the sound dies away, and suitable impressions are not left behind. Man's feelings and powers of sympathy are narrowed and localized and straitened; this is a consequence of the fall. Man has become little, because he has become selfish. His lively feelings rarely extend beyond his own person, his own family, or the exercise of his own senses. A pain in his own finger will affect him more than the tortures of thousands at a distance from him. The sickness of his own child will move his sympathies in a more lively manner, than the sickness and death of the inmates of a thousand infirmaries. Let him see with his own eyes

a waggon wheel go over a child in a neighbouring street, and he suffers a greater pang, than if he heard of a distant city, with its ten thousand inhabitants, being engulfed in an earthquake. Here is one of our infirmities. On an occasion like this, we appeal only to your feelings;—to your ears. We have nothing but poor words to move you by. I would wish on this occasion to appeal to your eyes also. I would wish to take you to one of the docks or timber yards in the neighbourhood of this hospital in the south-western part of our town, that you might there see, as on one occasion I saw myself, a fellow creature have his jaw and back bone shattered with a swinging crane; or that you might see one of his legs or arms, or both, so crushed, that they no longer present the aspect or proportions of a human limb, but rather a mummied mass of discoloured skin, and coagulated blood. It has come upon him in an instant, in a crash; so that from the vigorous exercise of all manly power, providing for himself and family, he is instantly prostrated to the most utter helplessness. His fellow workmen have laid him on a shutter; but where shall they carry him? To his home? Alas! his home is a cellar, where he and his wife and children have barely where to lay their heads. His children are young; his wife ignorant; and now, terrified and distressed, she is afraid to touch the mangled limb of her husband, lest she might aggravate the injury sustained. She can, in truth, do nothing more than add unavailing cries and bitter tears, to mingle with the groans and blood of her disabled husband. The scene is too dreadful to dwell upon, even in imagination; and yet, but for such institutions as the one I now plead for, such scenes would be of frequent occurrence. And then, when, after much precious time lost, a neighbouring surgeon is called into that cellar, what can he do? How can he exercise his noble calling? He has no table to stretch the sufferer upon; he has no boiling water, no bath, no bandages, no suitable help. If his work were done in the best possible manner, that under the circumstances it can be; yet, from the very pressure of these circumstances, it must be comparatively imperfectly done; and the result, too often, either impotence, or lameness to the sufferer for life; if, indeed, the life be preserved at all.

My dear brethren, the greatest precaution cannot guard against the recurrence of such calamities as these. The multitude of the workmen, the confined and

crowded places in which the work is carried on, the haste to which the men are often stimulated, must, in all our docks and timber yards and forges, lead, in the course of every year, to a great number of wounds and bruises and fractures and dislocations. You are now going to enlarge this sphere of accident, by extending your docks; even now, you are congratulating yourselves on the opening, as it were, of a new world to your commerce. Even now, you join in the expression of your feelings of gratitude and admiration to your fellow citizen,* who has been the means, beyond any other man, of leading to the negotiation of that commercial treaty, which is calculated to open communications, to reciprocate benefits, to cultivate sympathies, to consolidate friendships between the most distant sections of the human family. Even now, you rejoice in all this; and you are enlarging the field whereon all these accidents must occur. It is, then, for the relief of these last extremes of human suffering, that you are invited to contribute of your substance. You are bound to multiply your hospitals as you multiply your docks and timber yards, as you increase the building of your ships; as you multiply the number of persons engaged in hazardous employments, you are bound to multiply those places of blessed help.

For does any one ask, what can be done, in such a case? Is there help? Is there refuge? Oh! yes. I wish now I could take you, that you could see such a patient as I have described brought to the admission door of the Hospital I plead for—instantly attended to by the resident surgeon—immersed, if need be, in a warm bath, in a few minutes, or stretched on a table, constructed for the purpose, with a moving centre piece on a hinge, to be placed instantly at any angle of inclination the directing surgeon may suggest,—affording at once a firm and suitable position. Then the hideous mass of blood and flesh is carefully and critically examined. If amputation be inevitable, all the instruments of the most approved construction are at hand; if not, the fractured bone, the torn tendon, the lacerated flesh, all are laid in their proper places with anatomical precision. The tortures of the poor sufferer, instead of being aggravated by the unavailing cries of domestic woe, are soothed, as far as possible,

by the seasonable word of kind encouragement. The operation is carried on with skill and science, combined with that unflinching firmness, so necessary at such a moment, and that determined steadiness of performance, arising out of well grounded confidence in the science and practice of surgery. Then there is the most perfect accommodation for the sufferer in every other respect. A suitable bed, in a well aired and ventilated room, is ready to receive him; the fracture is tenderly cradled, even from the weight of the bed clothes, and a watchful matron is at hand to receive and execute all needful directions concerning diet. Oh! the contrast is touching! And to complete the picture, see, on the visiting day, the wife of the sufferer come to see him; and now, instead of tears of anguish and despair, she weeps tears of gratitude, to see the object of her dearest affection taken care of in a way that was quite impossible at his home. Yes, and those tears of gratitude, those broken sobbings of affectionate and mournful satisfaction, are mingled with thanksgiving to Almighty God; and blessings are returned from the overflowing fulness of her heart, upon the kind benefactors who have prepared such consolations for the needy.

My dear brethren, it is our privilege, to be partakers in preparing these consolations. It is our privilege, to be sharers in these benefactions. Oh! drink abundantly of this "pure river of the water of life!" This is a "pleasure," which flows from "God's right hand." One of God's own pleasures is doing good; and doing good without regard to the character of the receiver of the good. Oh! be "children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh His sun to shine upon the evil and the good, and His rain to fall on the just and the unjust." It is a god-like pleasure, this! Ransack the whole world of delights; seek for enjoyment in vanities, in vices, in the revelry of the senses, in the cultivation of the intellect, in the successes of ambition; and in vain will you seek, in vain will you look, for such a soul-satisfying joy as you experience when the delicious tear starts in the eye, and steals down the cheek, at the sight of the happiness that you have conferred upon others. Go ye, enjoy this happiness, while you prove to yourselves and to others the sincerity of your love.

* Sir Henry Pottinger, just returned from China.

NO SEPARATION OF THE BELIEVER FROM GOD'S LOVE.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. STEPHEN BRIDGE, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. MATTHEW'S CHAPEL, DENMARK HILL, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
JAN. 5, 1845.

"I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Romans viii. 38, 39.

Who shall tell how precious is the Bible to every true believer? Feeling that the life that now is, is but the pathway to that which is to come—that the way to heaven is too faint for the natural eye to trace, and too difficult for the unaided strength of man to tread; that the Bible is the chart that points out, and the lamp that shines upon the road; that it alone can be his support and solace in the house of his pilgrimage—the child of God can say, "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." There is no portion which, under the teaching of the Spirit of God, he may not find "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness." If he turns to the historical parts of the Word of God, there, as he ponders over the lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and holy men of old, he sees, as it were, the working out of the purposes of God, the embodying the Divine promises, His people led through darkness and difficulty, and by ways that they knew not, until, their feet being set in a large place, and their latter end made better than their beginning, they have been able to testify that "all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to His purpose." If the prophetic writings are the subject of his study, he sees that all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom he has to do; and gathers from the fulfilment of Jehovah's predictions in days that are past, the comforting assurance that there is no event in his life, however cheerless it may be, which the eye of his Father does not foresee; and no promise on the sacred page, however difficult its accomplishment, concerning which he may not say, "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" Need we speak of the value he puts upon the experimental portions of the Book of God—those Psalms of David—those Lamentations of the weeping prophet—those Epistles written by apostolic men, and stamped with the sanction of the Holy Ghost, which disclose as in a glass the intricate workings of the inner man, and rejoice the burdened spirit by the revelation, that in all its sorrows, conflicts, temptations, it is not alone; that it is compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses, who affirm that no strange thing has happened unto it; that they had the same rough path to tread, the same doubts to grapple with, and the same sins to overcome; that beneath it are placed the same everlasting arms which supported them, and that for it, if faithful unto death, there is laid up a crown as bright and beautiful as theirs?

But whilst the whole of the written Word of God is thus precious to the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; whilst there is no tree in this garden of the Lord, from whence clusters do not hang which are pleasant to the eye and good for food, and whilst at every turn along that narrow path, by which this heavenly messenger conducts the spirits of the holy to Jerusalem above, some glimpse may be caught of the land, yet very far off, and of the glory that is to be revealed; there will be some spots more elevated than the rest, where the pilgrims will love to linger—some full ripe fruits which afford richer foretastes of what the land of promise yields—some pages of the sacred Volume more felt and valued than the rest.

Such is this eighth chapter to the Romans. Who shall tell how many a believer, now before the throne, has been enlightened, cheered, supported by the great truths which it contains! Eyes

have wept over it, that shall weep no more; voices have rehearsed its blessings, which are now swelling the chorus of the skies; and hearts that beat with a quicker pulsation as they followed the apostle in his lofty flight, are now in full enjoyment of the privileges which, after all, were but dimly sketched even by this master mind. "Turn me," said a dying Christian when the swimming sight could no longer fasten on the page, "turn me to the eighth chapter of Romans, and set my finger at these words—'I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Now," said he, "is my finger upon them?"—and when told it was, without speaking more he said, "Now God be with you, my children: I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord Jesus Christ this night;" and so departed. And in a world like this, where we are made to feel that all is changing and that there are none abiding—where there are so many temptations to say, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? is His mercy clean gone for ever? will He be favourable no more?"—we need some strong assurance that the Lord will not forget His people, nor forsake His inheritance—that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And here we have the consolation that we need. Every probable or possible cause of separation between the believer and his God is mentioned or suggested, but all fall prostrate before the faith of God's elect, as did the walls of Jericho, when the priests blew with the trumpets in the days of old.

In order, however, fully to gather up the consolation which the text is fitted to supply, we must enter somewhat more minutely into the various particulars which it brings before the mind. And we pray, that in considering this passage, on the first Sabbath of another year, we may strike a note of comfort, which shall vibrate even to its close.

It assures us, then, first, that "death" shall not "separate from the love of God."

We wonder not, brethren, that the apostle should put "death" foremost, when enumerating those causes, which might seem sufficiently powerful to sever the bond which unites the soul of the believer with his God. At the time when he wrote, this son of perdition, led on by the powers of darkness and the princes of the world, was making continual inroads on that little flock, over whose welfare he watched with the tenderness of a father and a shepherd's care; those who were united together as with one heart and soul, who sought shelter in each other's bosoms from the club of persecution, and were driven closer together by the storm, they saw continually one and another of their brethren taken from them by a resistless hand; and the thought might sometimes flit across the mind, that yet they might be separated from him, who was to them dearer than a brother. And where is the man, who is not perpetually startled and dismayed, at the separations which death is continually making? It separates the man of business from the calling, which he had pursued with such constant and laborious attention, and from the wealth which he had been heaping together for his last days. It separates the man of splendour from the magnificence which surrounds him,—from the dwellings which he had fashioned after the similitude of a palace, leaving him nothing to lie down in but the shroud—the garment of the tomb. It separates the worldling from the world, in whose smiles he lived, amongst whose transactions his days had been consumed, and in which, although he quits it, his heart and his affections are centered still. And who has not felt the painful separations from kindred, of which death is the cause? Who has not witnessed the rending asunder of the ties, which bind husband to wife and wife to husband, parent to child and child to parent? Who have not wept the last tear of sadness over the clay-cold corpse of those they loved; and groaned in spirit, and been troubled, as returning from the grave, they have felt separated from those with whom they had long been united, and tasted the crushing loneliness of a widowed condition? And who, again, in the midst of Christian intercourse, has not often met with those, who are "all their life-time in bondage, through fear of death?" They do not so much fear the sickness that shall precede dissolution, the sorrows

of the parting hour, the shock that shall bring down the tabernacle to the dust; there is a darker, broader shadow, which throws itself across their path; from the want of what they would call clearer, fuller evidences, from deep views of the depravity of their natures and the holiness of God, they hardly dare believe that they can be numbered with the saints in glory everlasting. If we speak to any such this day, who, notwithstanding the gloom that overhangs the mind, are daily desiring to have more of the mind of Christ, and to live more to His glory, who love His people for their Master's sake, and who, in spite of many failings in duty, many infirmities and sins, can say—"Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that we love Thee;" if we speak to any, who so feel their debt of endless gratitude to a dying Saviour, that they would turn with abhorrence on themselves, in the contemplation of their own apostasy; then we may say to such, "Shake yourselves from the dust, arise, and sit down; loose yourselves from the bands of your neck, O captive daughters of Zion." The approach of death may be to you the cause of unutterable rejoicing; as you put down the body, you may take up the harp. Death shall indeed separate you from sin, which has so long troubled and defiled you; from sorrow, which has furrowed your brow and wrung your heart; from sickness, which has worn down the frame and spun the weary hours; from temptations, that have harassed, and doubts, that have distressed; from every foe that you longed to be free from, and every remnant of the bondage of corruption; but it cannot "separate you from the love of God."

It may, have seen, separate chief friends but it cannot unclasp the arms of Divine love, in which believers are safely enfolded. Nay, it is the ministering spirit, which opens wide the everlasting doors, through which the renewed and ransomed soul enters the presence-chamber of its Maker. Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. It is when the dust returns to the earth, as it was, that the "spirit returns unto God, who gave it." Hence Job could say, "Though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet, in my flesh, shall I see God;" and David exclaim, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints;" and

Paul assert—"To me to live, is Christ; to die, is gain." And hence, though the valley of the shadow of death is so dark and dreary, that even the irrational creatures shrink from approaching it, thousands have entered it with the song of triumph on their lips—"I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me;" and have scarcely had time to complete the stave, ere, being encompassed with the glory of the Deity, they have felt, that to be "absent from the body," is, to the believer, synonymous with being "present with the Lord."

But as "death" cannot "separate from the love of God," so neither shall "life"—a foe far more dangerous, though less dreaded, than the other. The path of life is one, where enemies innumerable and invisible watch for the Christian's halting; where many snares are set for his feet, and dangers lie thick around his steps; where he needs to tread with firm, but cautious step, with unflagging attention, with unremitting diligence, and with unceasing watchfulness. Surrounded as he is by distracting objects,—by the cares of life, and by the duties of his station, how difficult does he find it to keep his eye fixed upon the end of his course, and to seek first and foremost the salvation of his soul! How often does he find himself in danger of being so absorbed by the "things which are seen and temporal," as almost to lose sight of those which are "not seen but eternal!" The interesting nature of his business or profession; their utility to others; their importance to his family; the reflection that it is a duty to labour, with a view not only of acquiring a competent knowledge of our calling, but also of improving it—these become snares, the more insidious and dangerous, because set in paths which we are bidden to tread by the calls of duty and the commands of God. So, frequently, what danger is there of his getting a snare to his soul from those, with whom, unless he were taken out of the world, he is compelled from time to time to mingle! Their manner of life, their undecided conduct, their foolish conversation—what a blighting influence may these have upon his soul! How often, when the mind has been excited by strong desires after salvation, and its progress towards heaven has been rapid, have the cares of the world, the deceit-

fulness of riches, the returning love of pleasure, and the influence of semi-religious friends, silently, yet effectually choked the good seed, and rendered it unfruitful! Still, though the Christian is thus set in the midst of many and great dangers, which may, if unwatched and resisted, rear an everlasting barrier between the soul and Christ, it does not follow that it must be so. No; if we are looking well to ourselves, exercising unremitting vigilance over our own hearts; if we are guarding all the avenues of thought, and stirring up ourselves to the most earnest discharge of every Christian duty; if we are pressing forwards with the devotedness which the cause demands; if we are going forth to our intercourse with the world in the strength of that grace, which we have received in the private chamber or in the public means of grace; if the glory of God in the salvation of the soul, never be lost sight of, every daily duty having direct reference to it, every occupation being influenced by it, whilst our best energies are bent towards it; then, though the path in which we are called to move be one in which thousands fall at our side and ten thousand at our right hand, though of many who did run well it may be said—"Demas hath forsaken Me"—we, going forth strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, may walk in our way safely, and may boldly say—"I am persuaded, that neither death nor life shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The Christian, moreover, may enjoy the same confident assurance, with regard to the "angels, principalities, and powers," who, though unseen, the Scriptures assure us are not far from every one of us. To see, through the instrumentality of revelation, spirits, whose name is "legion," and whose name implies their number, "about our paths and about our beds;" to see the hosts of evil, "full of all subtlety, and children of the devil," skilled in stratagem by long experience, encouraged in the work of destruction by too frequent success, and fired by an enmity as quenchless as their everlasting torments,—to see these crowding round my steps, seeking to allure me from the Lord, to pile difficulties in the way of my approach to Him, to press down my soul when it would rise to heaven, to assail me with strong temptations adapted to my

weaknesses and sins, with every weapon which the devices of Satan have fashioned, or the armoury of hell can furnish; to look on such an array, and know that all these are against me, seems enough to daunt my spirit and arouse my fears. And if I had no other light burning round my steps, than that which my own wisdom can supply; if I had no other strength than that which is inherent in this feeble arm, if I had no shield broader and more impenetrable than that which worldly opinion and unaided resolution can furnish; then, at best, the struggle would be desperate and the issue doubtful. But if the "Lord of Hosts is with me, and the God of Jacob is my refuge;" if He is on my side, who, when there was war in heaven, glanced at the rebel armies, and they fell burning and swift as the lightnings from the heavens; then, though there rise up war against me, the war of stratagem, of numbers against one, of demons against men,—then, trusting in the Lord, if I may not be careless, I will be confident; if I must be watchful, I will not be afraid. Satan and those upon his side, may skilfully adapt their temptations to my circumstances and situation, now tempting me to distrust my Father's providence, and then setting me on the pinnacle of spiritual complacency; they may allure me to ruin by the enticing words of the worldly, and screen from my eyes the rich recompense of the future, by placing before me "the things of the world and the glory of them;" they may come down upon me invested with faculties to which I cannot attain, with an ear that can catch the gentlest whisper, and an eye that can pierce almost to the heart, and a rapidity of movement which outstrips the light; but still their wisdom is not infinite, nor their power omnipotent, nor their assaults irresistible, whilst for me and with me is that God who knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, whose love will not let me go, and whose arm, stretched out for my defence, bears up the earth and the pillars of it. Let, then, the principalities and powers of darkness attack me with unwearied earnestness and multifarious devices, they can have no power at all against me, unless it be permitted from above; and if allowed to have me so as to sift me as wheat, they shall but separate the precious from the vile, they shall not injure or destroy. True,

they may separate me from friends, from much of peace, from an unclouded and supporting assurance, but they cannot "separate from the love of God."

Amidst all the troubling of the wicked that remains as unmoved as the river of God's pleasures, and shines as constant and as brightly, as the sun, when screened from our view by the storm and the cloud. If, therefore, I find that I am abiding in God's love, (and "he that keepeth My commandments," said the Saviour, "shall abide in My love,") I am dwelling as in a strong city, where God has appointed "salvation for walls and bulwarks," against which, though the powers of darkness come, they shall not prevail; so that I may boldly say, "If God be for me, who can be against me?" "He that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, will deliver me out of the hand of these Philistines." He that "remembered me in my low estate," took me "as a prey from the mighty," saved me and redeemed me "because He had a favour unto me," He that "delivered me out of the snare of the fowler, and so broke the snare that I am escaped," He who drew me to Him, when I was a stranger, with the cords of His eternal love; now that I am anxious to do His will, to pay Him the best tribute that I have, however small, to cling to Him with all my strength, feeble though that may be, will He deliver me over to my oppressors? Yes, when the framework of nature shall be broken up, and a mother's love shall fail. Oh! no, not even then. "A mother may forget" the child she bore; "yet," saith the Lord, "I will not forget thee." "The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from thee, nor the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Then "thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?" Whilst you watch against your enemies, do not forget your Saviour; whilst you remember that they are mighty, also remember that He is Almighty; that even "the devils are subject unto Him;" that they may fulfil, but cannot disannul His pleasure; so that in the hottest of the battle, and the fiercest of the struggle, this may be your strength and song: "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers," strenuous as may be their efforts,

and settled as is their purpose—none of these "shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

And as evil angels cannot, so we need not take up time by showing, that good angels will not "separate from the love of God." We pass on, therefore, to observe, that the same truth holds good with regard to "things present, and things to come."

Various and changing is the very nature of that world through which we are passing. Vicissitude is stamped upon every thing beneath the sun; upon our circumstances, upon our friends, upon our feelings. How different are the conditions of those now before me! How chequered the lot of this congregation! Some are passing through the deep waters of sorrow. Some are just returning from the grave of bereavement. Some are struggling with difficulties, beset with doubts, and bowed down greatly by reason of their trouble. It is not with them as in days that are past. The bloom of beauty, the elegance of form, the vivacity of spirit which charmed, are gone; and with them the lover and the friend. The comforts which refreshed the soul, which lightened every trouble and sweetened every cup, seem now like wells without water; and the shadows of the present fall on the things to come. You "know not what may be on the morrow." You dread lest the darkness should grow deeper, lest sorrows should be multiplied till the burden would be more than a match for the strength; or lest, it may be, amidst the sparkling things of prosperity, your hearts should be turned from following the Lord. But "fear not, thou worm Jacob;" for "neither things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate from the love of God." He "rests in His love." He is "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." Come, therefore, what will, come what may, come what can, "say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him." Nothing can happen to him which is not foreseen, nothing shall befall him which is not permitted, nothing that shall not waft him nearer to the presence and blessings of his God. He may, in times to come, have "his feet set in slippery places;" the path of worldly advancement where so many have fallen, and multitudes have backslidden, may be opening before him; or

seasons of spiritual enlargement may be nigh, when the soul is most apt to be off its guard, and to forget, whilst feeding on the manna, that it is still in the wilderness; or, as he passes on in the way of his pilgrimage, there may be dark places through which he must go, abasement such as he has never yet known, trials most bitter, temptations most severe, may fall to his portion; but "neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature," which the future may give birth to, or imagination can create, "shall separate from the love of God." The varying circumstances under which believers may be placed may, and will often, bring the God of Jacob to their help; but neither dangers, nor difficulties, nor even death, shall separate Him from them. Just as the hen flies to the succour of her brood, and covers them close under her feathers when danger is at hand, or as the mother watches more narrowly, and carries in her bosom the tender and delicate child, so the Father of mercies is nearest in the hour of need, and often gives to the soul the most certain tokens of His love, when earthly hearts grow cold, and creature comforts fail. The experience of believers in all ages that are past, the largeness of the Divine assurances, and the perfections of the Divine character, all render it impossible that His love should fail.

Are we fearing desertion for ourselves, or destitution for those about us? "I have been young," says the psalmist, "and now am old, yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread." "When the poor and needy seek water, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel, will not forsake them, I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the vallies; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."

Are we suffering from the sickleness of men, or fearing the power of Satan and his legions? Then hearken to the words which drop from the lips of Revelation, full of comfort and of peace. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me." And again, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them Me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." Has God, dear brethren, done so much for you and so much in you? Has He given His providence for our guard, His covenant for our support, His saints for our companions, His angels for our ministering spirits, His heaven for our home, His Son for our redemption? Has He thus multiplied the kindest assurances of His everlasting love, and can we doubt its continuance? Surely this must be impossible; for it is "the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is for His sake, because His blood is upon our consciences, and His image on our hearts, because we are chosen in Him, justified through Him, one with Him and He with us, that this love shall be abiding. As, therefore, you go forth upon another year, to meet its changes,—and many they will be; "in all time of your tribulation, in all time of your wealth, in the hour of death" if that should come, let this be your language, for it is your privilege to use it—"I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

THE DESPAIR OF JUDAS.

"Judas, when he saw that Jesus was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood"—(Matt. xxvii. 3, 4).

In the repentance of Judas there are many circumstances which are to be found in repentance. He confesses his sin; he characterises it as a most odious one; for he owns himself a traitor, who has betrayed a righteous man to death. He accuses himself before the same chief priests who had instigated him to this dreadful deed. He brings them back the money with which they had bought his services. He braves their anger and their violence; and in this manner he partly removes the scandal he had caused by plotting against the life of his Master. God permitted all this, in order that the innocence of His Son should, on all sides, receive the testimony of unexceptionable witnesses, and that all those who were concerned in His death should declare, in various ways, that it was perfectly unmerited.

Judas himself made restitution of the wages of his guilt. He returned the whole; he did it without the persuasion of any one; he gave it back in the very face of their refusal to receive it; he cast it down publicly in the temple.

What, then, was wanting to a repentance so public, and to all appearance so humble, and which was not the effect of the fear of death, since he was in the enjoyment of perfect health? There was neither hope nor love in the repentance of this miserable man. He should have hastened to fall down at the feet of his Master, to implore His mercy, and that tender compassion, of which he had received affecting proofs even since his treachery. But he did not for an instant think of acting thus. He could neither bear the contemplation of his crime, the stinging reproaches of his conscience, nor the shame which he had brought upon himself. He compared his sin with the ignominy which had resulted to himself from it, and not with the mercy of God. The spirit of pride which filled his heart, destroyed the good seed which faith and humility might have made fruitful. He probably judged of it according to the dictates of his own pride, and as he would have looked upon it had another man committed a like offence against himself; he would not have forgiven it, therefore he believed that the Lord would not forgive him, measuring the mercy of God by the narrow limits of his own corrupt heart.

There was an essential difference between the repentance of these two men; St. Peter outwardly did much less than Judas, but he wept the right sort of tears. Judas showed much outward grief, and even much courage, but he grieved for himself alone; he was only afflicted on account of his disgrace, and showed no inclination to turn to the paths of truth and righteousness. He wept over his lost honour; but he still remained within the narrow circle of his own self-love. He was led on to despair, because his pride was not brought low; in his repentance he continued to act on the same principles as before his crime; his heart remained unchanged; he ceased not to seek self in all he did; he sacrificed his duty to his shame, as he had before done to his avarice.

It is not enough to look upon the despair and dreadful end of Judas with horror, we must do more; we must carefully guard our hearts from the least approach to any of those feelings which were harboured by him, and place the foundation of all our repentance on that trust in Christ Jesus which is due to Him alone. Above all, let us never separate the deep sense of our sins from that of the mercy of this compassionate Saviour; and look upon any doubt as to the efficacy of that mercy which is extended to all sinners, or as to the truth of that fact, that Jesus Christ put Himself in the place of those sinners who believe in Him.—*Rev. A. A. Gonthier.*

YOUNG MEN WARNED AGAINST THE SINS OF GREAT CITIES.

A SERMON,
BY THE REV. THOMAS DALE, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. BRIDE'S CHURCH, FLEET STREET, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
JANUARY 5, 1845.

His annual Sermon to Young Men.

"Neither be partaker of other men's sins. Keep thyself pure."—1 Timothy v. 22.

IMITATION is natural to man. But his choice of models, examples or precedents, will be influenced, if not decided, by the bias and inclination of the mind; and this, so long as the mind continues in its original or birth state, will be, alike in the rudiment and in the development, a tendency towards evil rather than towards good. Concerning the children of the ungodly it is said in Holy Writ,—and the assertion, though expressed in terms of strong hyperbole, is verified by continual experience,—that "as soon as they are born they go astray, speaking lies;" while the order of nature is, that such an infancy, forming congenial associations from the very first, and maintaining them to the very last, becomes in childhood waywardness, and in youth frowardness, and in manhood presumptuous sin, and in old age maturity for ruin.

Every stage or period of life has not only its own peculiar temptations, but its own peculiar tempters also. And it is an admonition, therefore, suited alike to the characteristic improvidence of youth, and to the calculating policy of old age—"Be not partaker of other men's sins; keep thyself pure."

On the present occasion, however, I shall consider the caution of my text, which was originally addressed to Timothy, as exclusively directed to those who are, like him, young men. I shall instance some of the moral shoals and quicksands, on which a youth, left to drift without chart or compass across the troubled ocean of this thronged and living metropolis, is most in danger to "make shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience;" and then, having practically enforced the warning, "not to be partaker of other men's sins," I shall proceed to point out by what means every one who desires to refuse the evil and to secure the good, may best be enabled to "keep himself pure."

In doing this, however, I must necessarily presuppose two important points. First, that all who hear me to-night, will admit St. Paul's definition of the nature of sin, which he terms "the transgression of God's law;" and, secondly, that all will receive his declaration of its consequence, if unrepented of and unpardoned, in the end—"the soul that sinneth, it shall die." All formal and systematic definitions of right and of wrong are thus superseded by the simple acknowledgment of a Divine revelation. If God hath spoken at all, His precepts must necessarily constitute the foundation of what is right, and His prohibitions the essence of what is wrong; and they who come hither, if they come on any other principles, are, to say the least, strangely out of place. We know of but one thing, which can contravene the authority which is embodied in the phrase—"Thus saith the Lord;" and that one thing we might fearlessly challenge the universe to produce, for it is the proof that the Lord hath not spoken; and here, whatever abundance infidelity may have furnished of presumption, it has never yet succeeded in establishing aught of proof. "Every word of God is pure," said the sacred writer: and assuredly, as the fine gold can abide the ordeal of the furnace when seven times heated, and comes out of it with undiminished weight and with unalloyed purity, so hath the Word of God—the evidence of it is with yourselves—endured the test of ages. Thrones have fallen, dynasties have been exhausted, and empires have passed away; but the Word of the Lord hath not passed away. It shall outlast heaven and earth. He, therefore, who is "partaker of other men's sins," from whatever motive or inducement, cannot hope to evade the penalties which those sins involve, unless he can persuade himself, (which seems to be utterly impossible,) that there can be uncertainty of purpose, or flexibility of prin-

ciple, or deficiency of power, or "variableness and shadow of turning," with the immutable God. I repeat the sentence—"the soul that sinneth, it shall die;" and I speak to those to-night, who regard death as the consequence and the penalty of sin, and who should therefore shrink from sin, just because they shrink from death:—that death, which is not merely the separation of soul and body, and which not only the hero can encounter for his country's sake, but the mother will brave in defence of her children; but that death, which is ever living, never dying—the worm that cannot die, the fire that cannot be quenched, the penalty that can never be mitigated, the forfeiture that can never be retrieved.

I say, then, to the young man, who is so far prepared to hear me, that he at least abhors sin in its character, and deprecates it in its consequence—"Be not partaker of the sins of others," and more especially those of young men like yourself.

And such a caution is peculiarly needful, under the present circumstances of this great metropolis. It must be evident to the most superficial observer, that the present system of conducting business, in many of its most extensive and popular departments, has exercised an unprecedented influence in bringing forward young men, congregating them in masses, and thus constituting them (so to speak) a distinct class—and a most important class—of the metropolitan population. Not only is the aggregate of professional students greatly increased by the multiplication of rival schools and colleges; but there are many trading establishments, in which young men are domiciliated to the number of twenty, thirty or even fifty—more than are to be found in the average of agricultural parishes. And these little communities have too frequently their dominant vices, laxities or indulgences; in which it is no easy task, for a new and untried member to decline participating.

Among these we must assign a conspicuous place to *infidelity—impurity—and* that which is the generating cause of both, *irreligion*. And in respect of these three, may it be peculiarly said to every young man, who is conscious of possessing not only an intelligent, but an immortal soul; who knows its value, and who desires to guard it against the enemy who seeks to devour and to destroy it;—"be not thou

partaker of other men's sins." Neither of *infidelity*, which is a specious sin; nor of *impurity*, which is a stealthy, a skulking, and a secret sin; nor yet of *irreligion*, which is at once a subtle and a spreading sin.

I. And first I will speak of *Irreligion*.

I here take this word *irreligion* in a practical sense. I take it to denote especially the desertion of the Lord's house, and the desecration of the Lord's day. I call it a subtle sin, because it is peculiarly ingenious in fabricating pleas and palliatives for itself; and I call it a spreading sin, because, when once harboured and indulged, it overruns the whole constitution of the mind, and develops, partly by the increase of opportunity and partly by the removal of restraint, every germ of evil that is latent in the corrupt heart of men.

It originates in that which is the most monstrous, and too often the most fatal also, of all fallacies—the subordination of the spiritual part of man to the sensual, of the perishable to the permanent, of the transient to the immortal. It assumes the pre-eminence of dust over Deity; it involves the preference of the body to the soul. It can only be rational, therefore, in the degraded being who claims kindred with the brute; it can only be consistent in "the fool, who says in his heart, There is no God." The attempt to justify it on any other grounds, as though a day of rest were to be converted into a day of revelry, and as though the fact of fulfilling during six days the duty that is claimed by man, could justify the withholding of that worship and service, which on the seventh has been reserved by God—that is so obviously self-refuting, that the attempt is seldom seriously made. When men who are engaged in business throughout the week, plead, as they very often do, that they must therefore devote the Lord's day to recreation, to inaction, or to convivial indulgence, it is said either with a smile or with a sneer; it does not for an instant impose upon themselves, and it is never meant to challenge or to elicit a reply from others. Of some such it may be said, that "they consider not that they do evil;" of others, that "they do evil" because "they consider not;" of others, again, that "they do evil" in spite both of consideration and conviction; and of all, that "their sin remaineth." For who

does not at once perceive, that exactness in the payment of every due to man can neither cancel nor counterbalance a robbery of God? There is no rational medium between denying God's right to reserve, or defying God's power to punish. *That* is the Sabbath-breaker's alternative; let him take his choice.

Against partaking this sin, therefore, the young man who hath been brought up to hallow the Lord's day, and to frequent the Lord's house, should be especially cautioned. For how often has it been proved by the sad experience of those, who have declared themselves with their expiring breath to be ruined past redemption, and wrecked for all eternity, that the forsaking of God's house was the first advance towards the forsaking God himself; that the first act of perverting the Lord's day to secular or sensual purposes, was the first step in the "broad road," that led downward to perdition!

And even the miserable pretext of expediency, by which some attempt to justify this under the false plea of necessity, will, when closely examined, expose its own shallowness. There is just as much of real repose and relaxation to the mind, in the complete change of its pursuits and objects, which is necessitated by a conscientious observance of the Lord's day, as there could be either in the vanity of sensual pleasure, or in the vacuity of listless indulgence. Little is gained even for the body by defrauding God of His right, and defying Him to His face; but oh! how much may be sacrificed for the soul! So much, we will venture to assert, that no youth of barely decent principles and average understanding, who would set himself deliberately to count the cost, and impartially to form the estimate, on the simple principle that he has a soul responsible as well as immortal, and which must be judged by God according to God's Word—no such youth would ever be content to cast in his lot with those, who "separating themselves," as "sensual, and having not the Spirit," may be called upon for their reckoning in the very act of aggravating their sin; and who, even though they may appear for a long time to sin with impunity, yet lay up in present indulgence large store of regret and remorse for future years. If the Gospel be true, our Sabbaths are the seed time for eternity; and what can they who have "sown the wind" expect,

but that they should "reap the whirlwind?"

II. But irreligion, by which I mean a practice habitually at variance with our own professed principles, is in itself so contrary to reason, that young men who dwell together in masses, and are emboldened by mutual example, and hardened by mutual profligacy, often seek to justify it by Infidelity.

And infidelity is, at the least, what the other is not—a specious sin. Young men of this description, who set themselves to be the tempters of others, work wilfully. They do not place in the foreground the monster Atheism, whose very aspect is its antidote; they go a very different way to work. They ask questions, which they know to be unanswerable; they demand proof, where proof, from the nature of the case, is impossible. They materialise the immaterial, sensualise the spiritual, and stupify the intellectual. They circumscribe the broad testimony of others within the narrow limits of their own brief experience; and just because in religion they cannot understand every thing, profess therefore to count themselves justified in believing nothing. The tone too, which these persons assume, especially when they are speaking to the young and inexperienced, is very specious and imposing; for they begin by arrogating to themselves the possession of superior penetration and superior knowledge; and as it only requires a little plausibility, together with a large share of presumption, to constitute what men are pleased to call a philosopher, the inexperienced are too ready to credit them with having investigated what they reject, and deliberated before they dogmatise. Nothing can be wider from the truth. In human learning, it is the little draught that intoxicates; and so in theology, it is the little knowledge that misleads. Men may begin to doubt, long before they are competent to demonstrate; and it is far easier to destroy, than to construct: just as a momentary outbreak of popular madness might level a vast and symmetrical fabric with the dust, which it would take whole generations to rebuild and to restore.

Of this sin, therefore, let not the young man, who prizes his soul and values his peace, be a partaker. Let him decline, as far as he can, all disputations or discussions, respecting the first principles of re-

ligion, which rest upon the authority of God, and receive not testimony from man. And where he cannot escape from hearing, however he may decline to reply, let him be careful to keep the exercise of reason within her proper limits, and not apply her scale and standard to things that are evidently beyond them. Let us at least measure the immensity of God's works, before we pretend to fathom the infinity of God's mind. Reason can judge of God in His relations, but not in His attributes. Reason can judge of Christ as the Saviour whom man requires, but not as combining the majesty of the Godhead with the mortality of the manhood—"the Word made flesh." Reason can judge of the Gospel, in its moral, social, practical influences, but not in its mysterious revelations of the past, and in its prophetic anticipations of the future. Reason can judge, as we all know, of the efficacy of a medicine, where she cannot investigate the origin of the disease; and she can deduce conclusions from known facts, where she cannot resolve the facts themselves into their real, or even reconcile them with their apparent cause. Nothing is to be dreaded, but rather every thing is to be hoped, from the right use of reason in matters of religious truth; but then it must be the right use; and assuredly that is utterly unworthy of the name, which, because it cannot penetrate a mystery, boldly denies a fact, and, as soon as it has raised a doubt, flatters itself that it has displaced a main prop, and disproved a weighty argument.

But the safety of the young man lies in avoiding temptation, as his duty will *sometimes* lie in resisting it. And "blessed is the man, that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor abideth in the way of the wicked, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who therein doth exercise himself day and night." To him shall the words of God be "sweeter than honey to his taste;" yea, more precious than great riches to his soul; for "by them is Thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward."

III. But now I have arrived at a portion of the subject, which it is most difficult in such a congregation to touch upon, yet impossible on such an occasion to pass by: a sin, which is indeed in its commission a secret sin, but which in its contem-

plation is a shameless sin, and in its consequence a deadly sin. I mean the sin of Impurity: the too frequent boast, and still more frequent practice of young men; and a sin, the intrinsic hatefulness and hideousness of which, they disguise from themselves and palliate to others, by arguments—if argument they may be called—which would tend, if true, to make passion predominant over principle, to make appetite the master of intelligence, and to make man the equal of the brute.

These arguments I will not pain you by repeating, nor detain you to refute; but I will place in direct contrast with them the emphatic admonition of St. Paul—for we may use the words of Holy Writ where we should hesitate to use our own—"Flee fornication; every sin that a man doeth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." The body of the Christian is "the temple of the Holy Ghost;" but "if a man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His;" and though fornication be the heathen's vice, yet to those who bear the Christian name, it will involve far other than the heathen's penalty. Here, if ever, we may apply the Lord's own principle of judgment; that while he who knew not his lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with few stripes, he who knew it and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. And if it be urged that temptations are manifold and nature is frail, the answer is obvious, that multiplied temptations demand augmented diligence, and manifested frailty does but call more loudly for restraining grace. That grace is promised to all who seek it; and if there are any, who will not employ the means by which they may stand, what plea can they urge, why they should be exempted from the disastrous consequences of a fall? There can be no doubt whatever, that this sin—this single sin—carries of itself a sentence of positive and perpetual exclusion from the kingdom of God. No perverse ingenuity or sophistry of man can ever erase from the record the explicit and irreversible decree—"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy:" while, however temptations may be multiplied, it cannot be denied, that from the age of Solomon to the completed canon of the New Testament, warnings have been multiplied in the same proportion. The house of the harlot, as Solomon declared, "is the way to hell,

going down to the chambers of death." And how often "at the last, when flesh and body are consuming," when to the sad retrospect of blighted hopes and ruined fortunes is added the far more keen and deeply festering agony of anticipated condemnation, the "fearful looking-for of judgment and of fiery indignation, that shall devour the adversaries" of God—how often has the wretched victim of his own vices bitterly cursed the hour, when he first became associated with those, who made a boast of licentiousness, and "made a mock at sin;" who taught him by their sophistries "not to fear God," and trained him by their example "not to regard man!"

Oh! then, be ever on your guard against all incentives to this fearful and deadly sin: against wanton conversation, against inflammatory reading, against unchaste amusements, against impure companionships, against every thing which can minister fuel to this deadly and consuming flame. Mark me: it is a sin against the body, as well as a blight upon the soul. It is the parent of every other vice. It generates infidelity, in order to stifle conscience; it leads to intemperance, in order to drown remorse; it occasions improvidence in the incurring of expence, and leads to dishonesty and breach of trust for the purpose of discharging it. You know I speak the truth. Like a spring impregnated with poison at the source, it mingles waters of bitterness with the whole current of life, and may bear into the ocean of eternity a sediment of foul corruption, which shall not be dispersed even there. Of one who thus lives, and who thus perishes, it has been fearfully said, that "his bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust;" and what will he do, when it shall awake with him to the judgment, and confront him before the tribunal of God?

Oh! then, ye who have not yet fallen, however sorely and severely tempted, let me say to you, in the name of Him whose blood was the purchase of your souls—avoid the infidel companion; abandon the society of the profane; mingle with the Sabbath-breaker and deserter from the house of God, only in secular pursuits and where duty calls; but above all, "flee fornication." Abjure all incentives to impurity. Here, beyond all, apply the emphatic words of one, who well knew

what he was speaking, and to whom—"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." Here, "if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Let thine answer be returned in the spirit, if not in the words of one, who was sorely tempted, but who nobly overcame—"How can I do this wickedness, and sin against my God?" Yes, let it be returned in the still more emphatic and indignant language of the apostle Paul—"Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid."

Thus far I have spoken of sins, which if not peculiar to the young, are yet most prevalent among them. There is one sense, however, in which I feel constrained by the complexion of the times in which we live, to suggest another application of the salutary caution—"Be not partaker of other men's sins."

It is just as true at this moment, as it was two thousand years ago, that "the love of money is the root of all evil;" and that "they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare." The "treasures of wickedness are" still "in the house of the wicked," though cozenage and circumvention have now assumed a wider range, and "the scant measure that is abominable," the "wicked balances," and the "bag of deceitful weights," which Jehovah denounced by the voice of His prophet, have been exchanged in our day for modes of trickery, more in unison with the spirit of the age: an age, which only scoffs at sins when they are petty and paltry; that only punishes iniquity as it deserves, when the offender is not gifted with wealth, or possessed of influence; and which estimates every sort of crime, not by the depth of moral turpitude, but by a scale of profit and loss. To be the conscious instrument of another's duplicity, the passive tool of another's dishonesty, is to be "partaker of his sin;" and hence every young man must expose himself to a very fearful risk, who shall take any part in commercial transactions, which he knows to be conducted on an unsound principle, and the profits of which depend on the extent and success of the fraud which is practised on the public, or the dexterity of imposition which can be passed off upon individuals.

The young man who is required by his

employer to do aught, that revolts and outrages his consciousness of right, ought at once to dissolve the connexion, cost him what it may. In this land of liberty, no man can be compelled to lend himself to practices, which dread the light, and court the darkness; which contravene the perfection of the law of God, and only escape punishment or reprobation through the imperfection of the laws, or the laxity of the morals of men. I do not mean, on such a subject, to enter into detail; it must suffice to appeal to the broad principles of right, and to apply here the apostolical maxim—"he who doubteth is self-condemned" if he partake in works like these, "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

It now remains, that in order to the completion of the subject, I should point out, severally and in detail, by what means these and similar perils may best be avoided—these and similar temptations overcome. "Keep thyself pure," said the apostle to his beloved Timothy; and he spake to one, who "from a child had known the Holy Scriptures;" who had long since been taught to ask the question, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" and not to ask only, but to answer it—"by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word." The best preservative against irreligion will be found in habits of prayer; against infidelity, in meditation upon God's Word; against impurity, in "keeping the heart with all diligence, out of which are the issues of life," and in guarding well the eye and the ear, which are the two chief inlets and avenues to sin.

This part of the subject, however, is so deeply fraught with the most weighty and momentous considerations, that it must be reserved for a second discourse; which I propose to deliver, if God will, on Sunday evening next, at Trinity Church in this parish. I must confine myself on the present occasion, (or I should transgress too far the limits which are assigned to discourses from the pulpit,) to one other precautionary means, which will connect itself immediately and importantly with the cause which claims my special advocacy,* and which I could well have been glad to defer on an occasion like this, had other and urgent engagements permitted me to postpone it. I point out, therefore,

only one out of many methods which might be suggested to each, of "keeping himself pure."

That form of Christianity, which the apostle James has designated "pure and undefiled religion," is in its nature directly opposed to all that is unsocial, selfish and exclusive. There is no tendency in the religion of the Gospel, either to monopoly or to reserve. It contradicts, and it counteracts the selfishness natural to man. So that "the true riches," unlike the wealth of this world—"the true riches" are increased in proportion as they are imparted. The "Pearl of great price" loses nothing of its lustre, because others are taught to seek where we have found it. He who desires the advancement of God's good gift in himself, must seek that advancement by the ministration of it to others; and it will invariably be found, that in proportion as the light of the Gospel is concentrated in the heart, it will be diffused throughout the home—throughout the sphere of the man's influence, be it what it may. "Look not every man on his own things," is the injunction of St. Paul, "but also on the things of others." And who does not know, that this was embodied in the apostle's own practice? For when he says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ," he asks in another place, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" When we speak, therefore, as we have done to-night, of severance from the companionship of the ungodly, abandonment of their pleasures, and disconnexion from their pursuits, we are very far from recommending seclusion—inaction—vacuity. Quite the contrary. If the chamber of the heart is empty, it will only be a temptation to the "evil spirit," that it is "swept and garnished;" and "the strong man" will assuredly return to it, unless it be pre-occupied and maintained by one that is stronger than he. Religion must be active, as well as contemplative. Solitude indeed has its benefits—and benefits they are beyond all price; but at the same time society has its claims; and if "the fear of the Lord," which is but another name for wisdom, is "to depart from evil," a yet higher degree, a yet nobler and more godlike exercise of that wisdom, is the endeavour to "win souls."

Youth is formed for action. It is the

season of enterprise. The faculties of the mind, when they are in healthful exercise, will instinctively seek and find objects, on which they shall attach. The voice of nature itself calls to youth, in a good cause as well as in an evil one—Up and be doing. And assuredly, where the demands of the secular are most fully and most conscientiously satisfied, there will be something remaining for the claims of the spiritual; and some portion even of the “days that are evil,” may be reclaimed as a seed time for eternity. Six days have been allotted to “our own work;” but for that very reason, the seventh should be consecrated to the Lord. And here at least, we may make our own souls to fructify, by caring for the souls of others. Young men who would “depart from evil,” lose much by omitting to “do good.” But why do they “stand all the day idle?” Why do they loiter and trifle away the precious morn of life? Is there no employment for them within the vineyard of the Lord? Surely Sunday Schools alone present a field of most important occupation, even to those who are wholly engaged during the week. And a field of most encouraging occupation also; for as it was while tending a few scattered sheep in the wilderness, that David was anointed to be the future ruler over God’s people Israel, so in the apostolical office of ministering to the little ones of Christ’s flock, grace may flow from the simple answer to the scholar into the teacher’s heart, and thus “the liberal soul” may be “made rich,” and “he who watereth,” with the dew of life, may “be watered also himself.”

But to those, some portion of whose time is at their own disposal, who have in time past trifled away many hours in sinful pleasure, and who would now redeem a few for God—for such there is weekly occupation also. The Sunday School teacher may, at least after the experience of some few months, become also the District Visitor; and in that capacity he may bear to the home of the parents the same saving truths, which he is endeavouring to impress upon the hearts of the children. He may, as the agent of the benevolence of the Church, minister things that are needful to the body; and he may at the same time, as the disciple of Christ, and so far the minister of Christ’s Gospel, (for every man is in one sense a minister,) pour the oil and wine of Gospel truth into the wounds of the

diseased and disordered soul. And while he does so,—while he strives to do so, whether he succeed or not, he is “alike blessed in his deed.” It was said by one, who had large experience of both, that “it is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of mirth;” and much may be learned in the abodes of poverty and sickness, of which in opulence, or in comparative comfort, men never dream. Oh! how *can* it be, but that the soul should thrive, while thus engaged in the Lord’s work? How can it be, but that the disciple should prosper, while he is an imitator of his Master; and the servant, while thus a follower of his Lord?

My Christian friends,—and now I address not young men only, but those of the other sex also—that sex among which the apostle Paul could find succourers, and from which we surely therefore may seek visitors; we invite you, at the beginning of another year, to engage in the work of the Lord. We seek not so much *yours*, as *you*. We would, that in this at least, male and female should be one in the work of Christ Jesus; and that there should be no other distinction between them, than there was between Aquila and Priscilla, whom the apostle affectionately designates “his helpers in Christ Jesus.” Those who are members of this congregation, must repeatedly have heard me say, that to constitute a perfect Visiting Society, we want a whole Church in action. We want every one, according to the measure of ability and opportunity, to carry out the principle of Christian brotherhood. We ought to have a subscriber to this Society in every member of the congregation, whose circumstances are such, that from his pleasures or his comforts he can spare annually the small sum of five shillings; and, what is of greater importance, we ought to have a visitor in every communicant, who is possessed of disposable time. For thus we could readily find occupation for one hundred Visitors in this parish alone, proportioning their labour to their leisure, and enlisting their kind offices in behalf of one family, or two, or ten.

Such, then, as are willing to co-operate in this work and labour of love, after mature and serious and prayerful reflection, I would invite to meet me at the Parochial School Room, on Tuesday evening next, at seven o’clock: and glad in-

deed should I be, to find on that occasion a band of young men, and women too, "whose hearts God had touched;" for charity is the principle, and ought to be the practice, of all true Christians, whether male or female. I should rejoice to find those, who at the bidding of eternal Truth, would employ this means also—the means of Christian, holy occupation, occupation in doing good to others—who would employ this means also to "keep themselves pure." For he who said, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world," said also by way of encouragement, what I now say to you in order to engage you in this work, those who are conscious of the work of God in their own souls, (for such only are fitted for it.)—"Brethren, if any do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save the soul from death, and shall hide the multitude of sins."

Such, then, is the encouragement to the labour, and such the expectation of the reward. Oh! may ye be stirred up, not only to liberality in bestowing—(we can draw forth, in time of necessity, the silver and the gold—the Lord hath still "much people in this city")—but far more to diligence in action. May ye be stirred up by the remembrance of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the concern to commence another year, as those should commence, who would conclude it with God, whether on earth or in heaven.

It is as trite as it is true, to say when addressing a congregation consisting in great measure of young persons, that extremes meet in youth and in death; that disease may precipitate decay, or accident anticipate old age. This, I say, is as trite as it is true; but remember, that while the triteness is general, the truth is personal. And what if it be exemplified in yourselves? O my brethren, be assured of this, that he who from the fear of the Lord abstains from being "partaker

of other men's sins," and he who from love to the Saviour strives to "keep himself pure"—that man, that woman, can neither live too long, nor die too soon. If he live, he will be blessed upon earth; if he die, he will, however young, be made mature for heaven. Grace is not limited to times and to seasons; "before we call, God will answer; and while we are yet speaking, God will hear." He can accomplish the work of ages in a day. Whether we die young, or whether we live to extreme old age, "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Oh! if there should be any present, to whom this is at once the first and the last attendance in the house of the Lord; who have come hither from impulse, or from curiosity, or from the persuasion of others, and to whom I am as "an enemy, because I have told them the truth;" let them at least remember this one thing—that the true wisdom of us all is to let our works be such, as we should desire to lie down with us in the dust, and to follow us even to the judgment seat of God.

To others I say—and I trust I speak to the great majority of my hearers—let them be what Scripture calls "the work of faith, the labour of love;" the offering of thankfulness, the imitation of their Master, the mite cast into the treasury of our God, that doth not lack its acknowledgement, and that shall not lose its reward. "There is, that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is, that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." And in the one case, the poverty will be perpetual; and in the other, the increase will be eternal. For "he that giveth to the poor" even of his abundance, still more of his necessity, which hallows and consecrates the gift—he that, being poor, giveth to those that are poorer than himself—"he lendeth to the Lord; and look, what he layeth out, it *shall* be paid to him again." Happy is it for him, that they for whom he does this "cannot recompence him; for he *shall* be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

SOBER-MINDEDNESS RECOMMENDED TO YOUTH.

WE commonly say of you who are young, that now is your time to make your fortune; it is a heathenish expression, for it is not blind Fortune, but an all-seeing Providence that we are governed by: but that is not all; it is not in your power to make your own lot; "Every man's judgment cometh from the Lord,"—(Prov. xxix. 26). Every creature is that to you, and no more, that He makes it to be; and, therefore, you must seek His favour; and reckon your lot best made when you have the Lord to be the portion of your inheritance and your cup, and then say, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places,"—(Psalm xvi. 6); that is best for you which is best for your souls, and in that you must soberly rest satisfied.

Jacob was setting out in the world, and going to take him a wife, when all he desired and aimed at, and if I may so say, intended for in his marriage articles, was bread to eat and raiment to put on, to be kept in his way, and brought, at length, to his father's house in peace; and why should any one of the spiritual seed of Jacob look higher in this world, who knows and hopes he has eternal riches in reversion after one life? Let young men be modest, and moderate, and sober-minded, in their desires and expectations of temporal good things, as becomes those who see through them, and look above and beyond them, to the things not seen, that are eternal.

You must be grave and serious, and not frothy and vain. This signification we commonly give to the word here used. Him that is serious, we call a sober man; and I put this last, of the ingredients of this sober-mindedness, because it will have a very great influence upon all the rest. We should gain our point entirely with young people, if we could but prevail with them to be serious. It is serious piety we would bring them to, and to live in good earnest.

Not that we would oblige young people never to be merry, or have any ill-natured design upon them to make them melancholy. No, religion allows them to be cheerful; it is your time, make your best of it; evil days will come, of which you will say you have no pleasure in them,—(Eccl. xii. 1)—when the cares and sorrows of this world increase upon you; and we would not have you to anticipate those evil days. It is mentioned as an instance of the promised prosperity and flourishing state of Jerusalem, that "the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."—(Zech. viii. 5). Nay, religion prescribes cheerfulness to all those who are sincere and hearty in it; "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works,"—(Eccl. ix. 7). God expects to be served by us with joyfulness and gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things—(Deut. xxviii. 47).

And it is certain, that none have such good reason to be cheerful, as godly people have; none can be so upon better grounds, or with a better grace; so justly, or so safely. I have often said, and I must take all occasions to repeat it, that a holy, heavenly life, spent in the service of God, and in communion with Him, is, without doubt, the most pleasant, comfortable life that any one can live in this world.

But that which I would caution you against under this head, is vain and carnal mirth, that mirth, that laughter of the fool, of which Solomon says, "It is mad," and "What doeth it?"—(Eccl. ii. 2). Innocent mirth is of good use in its time and place, it will revive the spirit, and fit you for business; a merry heart does good like a medicine, but then it must be used like a medicine, must be taken physically, only when there is occasion for it, and not constantly, like our daily bread. And, like physic, it must be taken by rule; as not too often, so not too much at a time; like opiates, which are taken by drops, and with great caution. When you make use of these medicines, it must be with due correctives; and you must take great care of yourselves, lest that turn to your prejudice, and become a snare and a trap, which was intended for your health and welfare.

Allow yourselves in mirth as far as will consist with sober-mindedness, and no further. Be merry and wise; never let your mirth transgress the laws of piety, charity, or modesty, nor intrench upon your time for devotion and the service of God. Wise men will always reckon him over-fond of his mirth, who would rather lose his friend than his jest; much more may he be reckoned so, who would rather lose his God and a good conscience. Never make sport with the Scripture and sacred things, but let that which is serious always be spoken of with seriousness; for it is dangerous playing with edge tools.

Take heed lest your mirth exceed due bounds, and transport you into any indecencies; that you give not yourselves too great a liberty, and then think to excuse it by saying, "Am not I in sport?"—(Prov. xxvi. 19). Set a double guard at such a time before the door of your lips, lest you offend with your tongues; and especially keep your hearts with all diligence.—*Matthew Henry.*

A SERMON, BY THE REV. HENRY MELYILL, B.D.

PREACHED AT CAMDEN CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
DECEMBER 22, 1811.

"Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die. Yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die: but, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"—John xxi. 22, 23.

You have, in the chapter before us, the account of that manifestation of our risen Lord to His disciples, which took place at the sea of Tiberias. It was a manifestation replete with interest and solemnity. The miraculous draught of fishes, and the strange fire found burning on the shore, prepare the mind for extraordinary action or discourse. Accordingly, as you will remember, our Lord solemnly reinstated St. Peter in the pastoral office, from which he might have been considered deposed, through his foul denial of his Master. Thrice did Christ propose to him the question,—*"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?"* and thrice, (the number corresponding, as we may believe, to that of his denials,) did He, on receiving an affirmative reply, commission him to feed His sheep. After this, our Lord proceeded to tell Peter, what he would have to undergo in His cause; delivering a prophecy, as to the death by which he should glorify God. *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not."* The evangelist himself explains the prediction, as relating to the death which St. Peter should die; and the well-attested fact that Peter died a martyr, and that he was put to death by crucifixion, proves the prediction to have received a literal accomplishment. Our Lord having thus taught His disciple, in reinstating him in his office, what death he should die, bade him follow Him; though it does not exactly appear whither,

or for what end, He directed him to accompany Him. The action was, probably, symbolical; Christ, having just foretold that St. Peter would have to follow Him to the cross, called on this apostle to follow Him at that moment, as though in evidence of his readiness to follow Him hereafter to shame and to death. Peter seems to have obeyed with alacrity. But *"turning about"* as they were leaving the place, he perceived that John, the beloved disciple, though he had received no command, was also following Christ. It is not improbable, that John, interpreting the following Christ, after what had just passed, into an expression of readiness to suffer in His cause, was anxious to show that he too was willing to lay down life for His sake, and therefore he accompanied his Master, though he had not been bidden. When Peter perceived that John followed, he put a question to Jesus—the question, *"Lord, and what shall this man do?"* We are not informed as to the motive which prompted this question. It would seem probable, that, having just been told of his own future martyrdom, he wanted to know whether a like end awaited St. John; so that it was little better than a rash curiosity which proposed the inquiry. At all events, the tone of our Lord's reply would seem to be that of reproof and displeasure; as though He would teach Peter to attend to that which concerned himself, and not be prying into what had to do with another. *"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me."* Christ does not expressly say that John should remain on earth till He came, though probably as

much is intimated; neither does He explain to what coming He refers; but He sufficiently shows, that the inquiry was one which Peter ought not to have made, and implies that it became him to mind his own duty, rather than to concern himself with what might be God's will in regard of his brethren. And then the evangelist, who is here writing of himself, informs us how this answer of Christ was misunderstood, or gave rise to a mistake amongst the disciples. Because Christ had intimated that John might, perhaps, tarry till He came, it was currently reported that John was not to die,—reported on the authority of Christ, or rather, as being actually the saying of Christ; for the expression of the evangelist, "Then went this saying abroad among the brethren," would seem to imply, that the precise shape or form in which Christ's words were commonly repeated, was that of a prediction that St. John was not to die, though there had simply been a question as to what St. Peter would have to do with it, if Christ willed that St. John should tarry till He came.

There will be found, we think, much material of interesting and profitable discourse in the several statements of our text, connected, as we have now shown them to be, with the foregoing parts of the chapter. In the question of Peter, in the reply of our Lord, and in the popular misrepresentation of that reply,—in all these, there is much to be observed; much that may be useful, alike for doctrine and reproof. We will not anticipate our subject, by any formal arrangement of its several parts; we will only pray, that, in meditating on this interesting portion of Scripture, we may have the assistances of that Holy Spirit, who, as He inspired those who wrote the Book, must interpret to those who read. if they are ever to understand its meaning, and ever to be better for its lessons.

I. Now we shall begin with pointing out to you what a mercy it is, that we are in possession of the Scriptures; and that these Scriptures, according to the language of our articles, "contain all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or ne-

cessary to salvation." For if the sayings of our blessed Lord, in place of having been committed to writing, under the infallible guidance of the Spirit of truth, had been left to be handed down from age to age by word of mouth, those who should have first heard them repeating them to their disciples, and these disciples, again, conveying them to the next generation, what security would there have been against such loss, or such corruption, as might have caused utter ignorance in regard of truths of prime and fundamental moment? Indeed, had it been the pleasure and appointment of God, that the Church should depend for her instruction on unwritten traditions, we ought not to doubt—it were great sin to doubt—that He would have kept the traditions undiluted, and caused them to flow on in one pure stream, without loss and without admixture. But our ready and our reverent confession of this, is in no degree at variance with a sense of the uncertainties of tradition, nor with thankfulness that we are in possession of the written Word, to which nothing may be added, as from which nothing may be withdrawn. As it hath pleased God to give us the Scriptures, and to shut us up to these Scriptures as alone authoritative as the record of the way of salvation, we may lawfully compare the certainty of the written Word with the uncertainty of oral tradition, and make it matter of grateful acknowledgment, that we have in our hands what evangelists and apostles were inspired to indite, for the instruction of the Church. And, if we look for evidence of the uncertainty of tradition, is it not sufficiently given in the statements of our text? Have you not here a saying of Christ himself, uttered in the hearing of His disciples? and yet is not that saying, so long as it is left to mere verbal report, most inaccurately given; or rather, is it not made to bear a sense which it was never intended to bear, and to assert what was not to be the fact? You have our Lord intimating, that it might be His will, that St. John should tarry till He came; for a time, this intimation is not committed to writing; it is passed about amongst the brethren, as reported by those who heard it; and what shape does it assume? What does tradition make of it? "That that disciple should not die." A confident persuasion gets possession of the Church, that John

was not to die; that he was either to remain on earth to the very end of time, supplying, in some sense, the place of Christ himself, or that, like Enoch and Elijah, he was to be translated, without seeing death. Surely, here is evidence of the uncertainty of tradition; here is proof that we can put no dependance upon anything but the written Word; that if, as the Papist would persuade us, we have not enough in the Bible, but must make up its deficiencies by traditions which are in the keeping of the Church, we are altogether at sea, in reference to what is truth and what is error, liable to have falsehood palmed upon us, with all the appearance and all the authority of a communication from that God who "cannot lie."

In throwing in this incidental mention of the utter insufficiency of tradition, the evangelist may be said to have delivered his testimony to the sufficiency of Scripture,—a testimony which is all the more memorable, if you observe the statement by which it is almost immediately followed: "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." So, then, there was abundance left for unwritten tradition. The Gospels contain only a selection from Christ's actions and discourses; and we might naturally have said, 'As there was so much more to tell, we shall probably find fragments preserved in other documents, as well as in the Bible. Many things must have been remembered over and above what evangelists recorded; and why, then, may not oral tradition serve as an auxiliary to written history?' This, we say, would have been a very natural supposition, on reading the concluding verse of the Gospel of St. John. But the statement of our text is put in, as if to guard us against such a supposition; as if to warn us, that nothing which was not written, written under the immediate guidance of God's Spirit, was to be depended on, or made authoritative in the matter of religion. For if, on reading the admonition with which St. John's Gospel concludes, or a similar one just before made, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this Book;" if then you were to say to yourselves, 'Then probably the Papist is right; it can hardly be doubted,

when so little, comparatively, has been written, that much was committed to memory, and may be deposited in the keeping of the Church, which she would cherish with all care, and transmit with all fidelity, the least particles of which must always be accounted most precious;' if, we say, you were to be thus moved to the looking for truth in tradition, in place of receiving nothing as authoritative but what you find in Holy Scripture; ought it not to suffice to convince you of your mistake, to show you that the evangelist could never have designed to throw you upon tradition, but rather earnestly desired to fasten you upon the written Word, as containing whatsoever is necessary for faith or for practice—ought it not, I say, to suffice for this, to observe that he himself gives you a specimen of what might be looked for from tradition, a proof of its utter incompetence for the transmission from age to age, of the sayings and doings of Christ, by recording, that when our Lord had merely said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"—"then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die."

Now this is an important and interesting use of the passage before us. The great truth of the sufficiency of Scripture,—a truth which is in controversy between the Protestant and the Papist, forasmuch as the Protestant will admit nothing as binding but what is contained in, or may be proved from the Bible, whereas the Papist claims at least equal authority for the traditions of the Church,—this great truth of the sufficiency of Scripture obtains a strong, if not a direct testimony, from the evidence afforded as to the incorrectness and incompetence of tradition. It were not easy to persuade men, that God had committed to tradition any important truth omitted in Scripture, when they have observed that Scripture itself stamps tradition as unfit to be trusted, by mentioning that the traditional version of our Lord's saying, that John might tarry till He came, was that our Lord had said, that John "should not die."

II. But, having made this use of the passage, it will be well that we observe how the mistake is likely to have arisen; how probably it came to pass, that when our Lord's words were misrepresented, it was in that particular way which the

evangelist records. For we shall generally discover some reason for the precise shape in which misrepresentation arises, over and above the proneness to error in passing from mouth to mouth. Even when you take nothing into the account but the uncertainty of tradition, there will frequently be a prejudice, or a predisposition, on the part of him who receives such testimony, which will cause him to give that testimony a peculiar colouring or turn; and when this process has been twice or thrice repeated, there will remain but little coincidence between that testimony as originally given, and that testimony as transmitted.

Now we may certainly gather, from many parts of Scripture, that the early Christians were strongly impressed with the doctrine of Christ's second coming; that they were intent on that coming, imagining it to be at hand, and longing for its arrival. I really do not know a more remarkable text in the Bible—remarkable as showing a great and reproachful difference between the early Christians and ourselves—than that in which St. Paul prays thus on behalf of the Thessalonians: "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and unto the patient waiting for Christ." Some expressions in his first epistle to that Church appear to have produced an impression, that Christ's coming was very near. In his second epistle, St. Paul removes this impression, showing that the day of Christ could not come, except there came a falling away first. But then, as though he felt how bitterly the Thessalonians would be disappointed at finding His coming deferred, he prayed on their behalf, that they might be "directed into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." Ah! my brethren, would the apostle have much need to offer such a prayer on our behalf? Impatience for Christ's coming is hardly the fault into which we seem likely to fall. There is abundance of "patient waiting." We are contented enough that Christ's coming should be deferred, and perhaps might be disturbed were we to believe it at hand. We profess our belief that Christ is to come a second time in power and great majesty; that He is to come, to take visibly upon Himself the sovereignty over all things, to punish every enemy and to exalt every friend; but as to any eagerness for His

coming, as to any longing expectation, alas! which of us feels it needful to pray with St. Paul for the being "directed into the patient waiting for Christ?" Which of us exclaims with St. John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus?" But the early Christians were all anxiety for the second coming of Christ. To them that coming stood associated with their brightest hopes. It was not at death that they expected to receive the glories of their portion; they knew that they could not have them till the destruction of death, and that death would not be destroyed till "the sign of the Son of man were seen in the heavens," and Christ should descend to gather together His elect. Neither was it only on their own account, for the sake of the full happiness which they themselves would then receive, that they looked so intently for their Lord's second appearing. They loved with a pure and fervent love the Redeemer, who had bought them with His blood; they longed, therefore, that He might come to be "glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe." They panted for that visible recompense of His mighty endurances, when He should be crowned as "King of kings, and Lord of lords;" when all creation should adore Him, and swell the anthem which magnifies His name. Where are their successors in all this? Look amongst ourselves, and what, for the most part have we, but a cold assent to the second advent of our Lord, as to that with which we have no immediate concern, and with which, perhaps, we would rather not have any? or what but a false identification of Christ's coming with our own dying, as though the day of his death were to each individual the day of Christ's coming; a most injurious representation, for Christ will come to raise the dead body, and not to lay it in the dust? Indeed it were well, and now, more especially, when, in approaching the first advent of Christ, we are directed by the Church to consider the second,—indeed it were well that we should more try ourselves by this doctrine of the second advent, remembering what St. Paul says,—"Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." It were well that we should trace in Scripture, the indications of the earnest longings of the early Christians for the re-appearing of our Lord; that, comparing ourselves with those in

whom love was strong and bright, we may judge whether the flame have not become sadly enfeebled and dimmed. And our text may be considered as containing one of those indications. See how readily, how quickly, they inferred, that St. John was not to die, if he were to "tarry until Christ came." I can imagine their own desires, their own hopes, as producing or perpetuating, the misrepresentation of the saying of their Lord. I can imagine their seizing delightedly on the traditionary version of this saying, and loving it too well to examine very carefully whether it were strictly correct. Men who were expecting Christ's coming, would naturally come to the conclusion, that if St. John were to "tarry until Christ came," he was "not to die." Men who were not expecting Christ's coming, would have invented some different solution. They would probably have said, 'Christ only put a case; He merely asked what it would be to Peter if he were to tarry till He came; and His question did not necessarily imply that St. John was to tarry till He came.' And thus they would have got rid of the saying; and that, too, without doing it any violence. For here you are to observe closely the peculiarity, that had our Lord's words been faithfully reported, they would not necessarily have conveyed any impression as to His coming, whilst John lingered on the earth. They affirmed nothing as to John's tarrying; they simply imagined a possible case, for the purpose of rebuking the curiosity of St. Peter. But the brethren may be said to have assumed that Christ was to come soon, and thus their assumption would give a shape to the tradition. John is to tarry till Christ come; so, then, John is not to die; Christ will come within the natural term of John's life. Ah! my brethren, make the case clear, by supposing it amongst ourselves, now that the doctrine of the second advent finds little favour, or is explained away. Suppose the question to have been put in regard of one of us, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" What would others say? Probably that the question settled nothing at all about Christ's coming; probably that it proved nothing, as to how long that disciple would live. There would not be much fear of our misrepresenting the question. We should, perhaps, report it faithfully enough. Disposed to regard the second advent as

something distant, with which we had little personal concern, we should not be likely to give such a version of the question as would bring that advent to our own day, making it fall within the lifetime of one of our contemporaries. But let the case be different; let us be all eagerness, in the expectation of Christ's second coming, and we should seize joyfully on the question; we should be too well pleased with the supposed confirmation, to allow ourselves to examine with any rigour, the accuracy of the tradition. We should watch with jealousy the signs of old age in St. John, and be gladdened as his failing strength proved him not designed for unnaturally long life. Ah! if the early Christians furnish evidence that tradition is not to be trusted, forasmuch as even they corrupted and gave a false version of the saying of our Lord, they also tell us how ardent they were for Christ's second coming, and thus reprove our cold and our degenerate piety, forasmuch as only amongst men ever watching and ever wishing for the Redeemer's return, could there have gone "this saying abroad, that that disciple was not to die."

III. But let us now consider whether there were any sense in which St. John "tarried till Christ came;" for though it does not necessarily follow from our Lord's question, that the beloved disciple was to await the coming of his Master, it is the more natural interpretation that such would be the case. And there is no doubt that our blessed Saviour often spake of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the exile of the Jews, as His coming. Indeed He intermingled all His prophecies of these events, and of His personal second advent. So almost imperceptibly do His discourses pass on from one to the other, that even now we have difficulty in determining where they speak of things past, and where of things yet to come. The term, "the coming of the Lord," is no doubt used in Scripture for any signal interference of God, especially for any such judicial visitation as may be provoked by the sins of a people. And the analogy which, in many respects, may be presumed to exist between such visitations and our Lord's personal advent, is an analogy which sufficiently accounts for the use of the term, for such an event as the destruction of Jerusalem being spoken of as the coming of Christ. But it is very observa-

ble, that the early disciples would not allow themselves to be diverted from the personal coming, of their Lord. It was that personal coming for which they looked; and they were not to be put off from it by any partial or typical fulfilment of the predictions, on which they rested their hopes. You gather this from the fact, that they argued that St. John was not to die, if he were to tarry till Christ came. They had not understood by Christ's coming merely such an event as the destruction of Jerusalem—St. John might have tarried till that "coming," and nevertheless have died; but the coming on which their minds were fixed, was that at which death was to be abolished or finally "swallowed up in victory;" for this coming alone it was, to which if a man tarried, he would not see death, but would be changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Still, as we have said, the destruction of Jerusalem might be, and was called, "the coming of Christ;" and it may probably have been to this event that our Saviour alluded, when He spoke of St. John as tarrying till He came. For St. John lived to extreme old age, probably till he had numbered a hundred years, and therefore witnessed those terrible judgments on his country and his people, which were likened to the coming of the Lord.

And if we take our text as predicting that this apostle should survive every other, and remain on earth not only up to the time, but long after the threatened vengeance on the unbelieving Jews, indeed it might not be too much to say, that the question, "What is that to thee?" has no such point in regard of us as it had in regard of St. Peter. To St. Peter the question applied, for it would be nothing to him if St. John tarried till Christ came; but it is much to us, we have the closest possible interest in the fact, that John remained with the Church for so protracted a time. For John lived till certain heresies had arisen in regard of our blessed Lord's person; till bold and bad men had even dared to call His Divinity in question; and we may not unreasonably suppose, that, in part at least, these heresies gave the particular tone to his writings, or determined him as to those doctrines of faith on which especially to treat. For the doctrine of Christ's Divinity is that on which the writings of St. John peculiarly bear. It is this which distinguishes him as an evangelist from the rest. If,

according to the cherubic symbols, as seen in the book of Ezekiel, and which the current interpretation of the Church from the earliest days refers to the four Gospels—if St. Matthew be the lion, asserting forth most strongly the royalty of Christ; St. Mark the man, as dwelling most on His humanity; St. Luke the ox, the animal used in sacrifice, as giving prominence to the priesthood and propitiation of Christ; then is St. John the eagle, as soaring towards heaven, gazing, and teaching us to gaze, joyfully and reverently, on the uncreated splendours of the Lord our Redeemer. You cannot need evidence, if acquainted with the Gospel of St. John, that in no part of the New Testament does the glorious truth of the Divinity of Christ flash forth with such frequency and brilliancy; whilst, again, his epistles, though full to overflowing of that love which he had drawn, we may say, from the breast on which he had long been privileged to lean, are interspersed with stern denunciations of the antichrist, whose appearance was even then disturbing the Church. And if we may refer to the "tarrying" spoken of in the text, the earnestness of St. John in maintaining and setting forth the divinity of our Lord, then truly the question, "What is that to thee?" cannot be directed to ourselves. To us it matters much that John was thus spared. The continuance of the eagle on the earth, that the waving of its bright wings might scatter the foul brood of heresy—for this we have cause to give unwearied thanks. And now, in the very evening of the world, we owe it to the royal bird having been so long detained from its own upward flight, that the path is so luminous by which we ourselves are to mount. Then remember, further, the visions of St. John—visions which he has recorded and embodied in the book of Revelation. We will not say that he might not have had these vision had he died young; still we know, that "the pure in heart" are they who "see God;" that by a lengthened and painful course of discipline is the soul purged, and fitted for extraordinary manifestations of the invisible world. And it may be, that through the years upon years of a protracted pilgrimage, was St. John being disciplined for the marvellous disclosures vouchsafed to the exile in Patmos, when the sound as of a trumpet bade him ascend, and when the city, whose gates are of pearl, and its streets of gold, spread its

glories before his delighted eye. Verily we have much to do with St. John's having tarried till his Lord came. He tarried—that he might receive the mighty figures of the apocalypse. Dark may the book of Revelation be—dark with excess of light; but it is that book, the prayerful study of which best tells the catholic Church what events to expect, and the individual Christian what a home awaits him when his warfare shall be done. Thither must we turn, if we would know the solemnities of our Lord's approach, and if we would assist the eye of faith to a glimpse of the inheritance of the saints, or the ear to catch some notes of the minstrelsy of heaven.

See, then, how deep is our interest in a passage of Scripture, which it were easy to look upon as not concerning ourselves. It was much, that it gave us a lesson as to the sufficiency of the Bible, by practically exposing the fallacy of relying on the aids of tradition; it was much, that by shewing us incidentally how the minds of the first disciples rested on the second coming of Christ, it rebuked our colder love, which finds little to lament in the lengthened absence of our Lord. But these uses of the text made no account of the fact that the prophecy had a fulfilment, and that John did tarry till Christ came. Now, however, we have turned to the writings of St. John, writings which seem to take their distinctive character from the lengthened residence of that apostle on earth—which are replete, in consequence, with the highest testimonies to the truth, without which we are "of all men most miserable," the truth of Christ's essential Deity—writings into which are gathered all the fortunes of the Church, up to the close of the dispensation, yea, which lay open eternity; whilst over all of them is diffused so much of the spirit of the dove, that we are best taught the charity which God approves, as we study to follow the eagle in its buoyant soar and majestic rush. Oh! then, ought we not to answer the question, "What is that to thee?" "Blessed, for ever blessed be Thy name, that Thou didst will, in regard of Thy servant John, that that man should tarry till Thou thyself didst come."

But we ought not to dismiss this subject of discourse, without glancing for a moment at a more practical lesson which it should evidently furnish. We have already observed, that the object of our

Lord's question would seem to have been the rebuking the curiosity of St. Peter; the drawing off his attention from others, and fixing it on his own trials and duties. And it is well worth remarking, that tradition appears to have let slip what was practical in the saying of Christ; to have fastened on what might gratify speculation, as giving date to an expected event, but to have utterly lost sight of what might have improved the character, as giving a rebuke to a too common disposition. This is but what men often do, in regard of texts and passages of Scripture. They may use them, and not wholly without mistake or perversion, in some argumentative process, or to support some favourite theory; but they lose sight of their bearing upon conduct, or even suppress their testimony against all unrighteousness of life. They are ready enough to keep hold of the curious fact, that St. John was not to die; but they altogether let go the pointed reproof—"what is that to thee?" Let not this, however, be our case. Observing how Christ rebuked St. Peter, let us consider, whether the busybody's temper—the disposition to meddle with other people's affairs—be not frequently found amongst us; and whether, therefore, there be not great need of the admonition—"What is that to thee?" What an acute eye we have for other men's faults! what a dull one for our own! What a readiness is there to discuss and to dissect the character of a neighbour! and what a reluctance to enter into our closet, and to examine our own! Almost every man is ready and eager to go upon the Jury, as long as it is not himself upon whom the assize is to be held. For one who will rigidly scrutinize his own actions and motives, there are hundreds who will constitute themselves judges of their fellow Christians. With a fatal facility, we take for granted that we shall go to heaven; and then employ ourselves in debating whether many around us have not missed the road. My brethren, this ought not to be. Every one of us has more than enough to do, in keeping his own heart and regulating his own life. It is worth your observing, that the evangelist says—"Then Peter, turning about, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following." Peter had to "turn about," in order to see John. Had he simply followed Christ, as he had been bidden, he

would have seen nothing of John. And thus it is with us. We "turn about," when we look after our neighbours; we go straightforward, when we look only to Christ.

Remember, then, that "every man shall bear his own burden;" remember, that "every man standeth or falleth to his own Master." Exercise charity rather than curiosity; the "charity" which "hopeth all things," not the curiosity which prieth into all things. Say not with Peter, "Lord, what shall this man do?" but with Paul, "Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?" You are quite safe, in waiting till you are in heaven to know whether others shall be there too; but you may lose the path yourselves, by "turning about" to see whether others are following or not. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me." "If I will that he have fewer, or that he have heavier trials, 'what is that to thee?' If I will that he linger long upon earth, or that he be speedily removed, 'what is that to thee?' If I assign him extraordinary duties, or confer upon him extraordinary privileges, 'what is that to thee? Follow thou

Me." I have given thee enough to do, and enough to bear. It diminishes not thy mercies, that another has greater; it adds not to thy troubles, that another has less. It would not "make thy calling and election" more "sure," to read another's name in the Lamb's book of life; neither would it invalidate thine own hope of glory, to be told, that another came short. "Follow thou Me."

O blessed Lord! give us Thy grace, to enable us to obey Thy command. Teach us to look within, to busy ourselves with ourselves, to be severe on ourselves, gentle and charitable to others; to follow Thee too stedfastly and too intently, to have time to "turn about," or inclination for unprofitable questions as to our brethren.

"Follow thou Me!" And whither now goeth our Lord? Indeed, when He spake to Peter, He was about to pass to the right hand of God. But He had, just before, told this disciple that he must have fellowship with Him in His sufferings. Oh! let this truth be remembered by all. We must follow Thee, O Lord! to Thy cross, if ever we would follow Thee, O Lord! to Thy crown.

SOBER-MINDEDNESS RECOMMENDED TO YOUTH.

You must be humble and modest, and not proud and conceited. The word signifies to "behave one's self modestly." So Chrysostom says: "Sober-mindedness is the same with lowly-mindedness." And Theodoret makes it the same with that poverty of spirit, on which Christ pronounces His first blessing,—(Matt. v. 3). It is recommended to the younger to be clothed with humility,—(1 Pet. v. 5.) that is, being sober-minded.

It is an observation that I have made upon the little acquaintance I have had with the world, that I have seen more young people ruined by pride, than perhaps by any one lust whatever; and therefore, let me press this upon you with all earnestness; and it is a caution introduced with more than ordinary solemnity; "I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you;" and what is the word that is thus declared to be of Divine original, and universal concern? It is this; that no man "think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly,"—(Rom. xii. 4): let him think unto sobriety; the word used in the text—(Titus ii. 6.) let him think himself to a sober mind, and always keep in that good mind.

Keep up low thoughts of yourselves, of your endowments, both outward and inward; of your attainments and improvements, and all your performances, and all the things you call merits and excellences. Boast not of a false gift, of what you have not, nor be puffed up with what you have. What there is in you that is commendable, wink at it yourselves, as most people do at their own faults, and diminish it, and look much at that in others which is more commendable. Let not the handsome glory in their beauty, nor the ingenious in their wit, for there cannot be a greater alloy to the glory, than to have it said, such and such are comely, and witty, but they know it. Does your face in any respect shine? Be as Moses was, he "wist not that the skin of his face shone"—(Exod. xxxiv. 29;) and do what Moses did as soon as he perceived it,—put a veil upon it. Delight more to say and do what is praiseworthy, than to be praised for it; for what hast thou which thou hast not received, and what hast thou received which thou hast not abused? And why then dost thou boast?—*Matthew Henry.*

THE YOUNG MAN'S ONLY PRESERVATIVE.

A SECOND SERMON,
TO YOUNG MEN,
BY THE REV. THOMAS DALE, M.A.

PREACHED AT TRINITY CHURCH, GOUGH SQUARE, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
JANUARY 12, 1845.

Keep thyself pure."—1 Timothy v. 22.

SUCH was the caution addressed by St. Paul to Timothy, "his own son in the faith," after he had exhorted him to "be not partaker of other men's sins." For, while imitation is natural to man, and associations and companionships are therefore most frequently and fearfully instrumental in beguiling him to evil, the preference and the adoption of what is good must be strictly a personal act. It must originate in a purpose formed alone; it must be sustained by a ruling principle and master motive, abiding and operating within. The man must for himself have counted the cost; he must for himself have formed the estimate. He must have individualised his own soul, as an atom, though an imperishable one, amidst the vast human aggregate of immortality. He must have asked the question which none can answer, and felt it to be to himself unanswerable—"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Thus he will be prepared for a personal and an habitual effort, as implied in the precept—"Keep thyself pure;" and while he recognises in the outset the primary truth, that he can do nothing for the salvation, or the sanctification of his soul, without the grace of God, he will also connect with it another, that God will do nothing without himself.

In the abstract, the text, brief as it is, contains a precept impossible to be fulfilled. For who does not know, that in His judgment "God looks upon the heart?" and yet, "who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" But in the connexion which God has been pleased, under the Gospel dispensation, to establish between man and Himself as the God that heareth and answereth prayer, it is not practicable only, but imperative, that man should do this very thing; or why should the apostle James exhort—"Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded?" The solution of the apparent difficulty lies upon the surface:

we can do relatively, what we cannot do absolutely; we can do in association with the grace of God, what we cannot do without it. The heart of man will generate, but it need not harbour sin; and it is, therefore, the purpose of the mind, however thwarted by its appetites or impeded by its lusts, which constitutes, in the sight of God, the faithful servant, the true disciple, the living member of Christ, the child by adoption and grace.

This will appear more clearly as we proceed, alike with reference to sin in general, and to those sins which were specially regarded in the former discourse* as the prevalent and peculiar vices of young men; as the moral shoals and quicksands, on which a youth, left to drift without the chart of Scripture and without the compass of faith, across the perilous ocean of this thronged and troubled metropolis, would be most in danger of "making shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience."

Those sins, as many of my hearers tonight will remember, were said to be—Irrigion—Infidelity—and Impurity; to which I might have added Intemperance also. And to each, and to all, we may apply the caution—"Keep thyself pure."

We will, however, without such special reference, take such a view of Christian purity, as shall be inclusive of them all. And we will hope, that those young men, in whom conscience is not stupefied by the opiate of infidelity, nor the understanding obscured through the ascendancy of prejudice, nor the will enslaved by the tyranny of selfishness, nor the heart "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," will neither tax us with demanding what is impracticable, nor even with urging what is unreasonable, while we first show what is here meant by purity, and then, in conclusion, press home upon each the admonition—"Keep thyself pure."

Purity, then, is uprightness of action, sincerity of purpose, and singleness of

* See ante, No. 1, 217.

heart. It is based upon the relation, in which man must necessarily stand towards God: a relation, which reason herself has no alternative but to admit, unless she turn right round upon her own conclusions, and in her own despite adopt the self-refuting absurdity of "the fool, who hath said in his heart, There is no God." To deny the existence of a great First Cause, the Contriver and the Creator of all that we can perceive and all that we possess, the Architect of the heavens and the Designer of the earth—this were itself less repugnant to reason, than to imagine Deity existing without its attributes; to count of "Him who formed the eye" as though He did not see, and of "Him who planted the ear" as though He did not hear;" in other words, to depose the Maker of heaven and earth from the sovereignty of all that He hath made, and to despoil and divest Him of the attributes by which He made it. Let but the intelligent mind endeavour even in thought to set limits to the wisdom, or to the omniscience, or to the almightiness of God; and it will soon desist from the attempt, as more hopeless and absurd, than it would be to scale the precipice, or to span the heavens, or to penetrate by some new and strange mechanical power the central caves and recesses of earth. We have no choice, even on reasonable grounds, except to recognise an all-pervading, all-preserving, all-controlling Deity. And what nature herself hath made a rational supposition, Scripture "given by inspiration of God" hath made also a religious truth. This is its language: "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;" "the darkness and the light are both alike to Him;" He "fills heaven and earth;" "about the path" by day, as well as "about the bed" by night, He "spieth out all our ways;" "all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him, with whom we have to do." And if it be asked, whether by man or by fiend, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? and whither shall I fly from Thy presence?"—there is but one answer, and it is that which His own Word returns: "Hell itself is naked before Him, and even destruction hath no covering."

Purity, then, in its principle, is the application of a known truth—a truth which arises out of the necessity of the Divine nature, and cannot even be plausibly disputed, much less philosophically disproved, by any intellect of man; it is the application of this truth in its relation to ourselves, as creatures ever under the eye

of our Creator, and as responsible beings continually within the hearing and beneath the notice of our Judge. We have the practical exemplification and embodiment of this principle even under the law. It was to Joseph, when sorely tempted, a preservative from impurity: "how can I do this great wickedness and sin against God," the ever present God? It was to Moses a preservative from irreligion, when recommended at once by powerful interest and by prevalent example; "he endured," we are told, "as seeing Him who is invisible." It was to the psalmist a preservative from infidelity, when he was "envious at the foolish," and looked with jealousy upon the prosperity of the wicked, and had even begun to ask—"How doth God know? and, is there knowledge in the Most High?" He found the resolution of his doubts by repairing to "the sanctuary of God," and looking upon "the end." And what this principle was under the law, that and even more than that must it be under the Gospel, because we have there a fuller development of those principles, by which God doth show to us He will hereafter judge the world. "The Father," we are told, "judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father," which hath sent Him. "Wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus, there is He in the midst of them." And consequently, however multiplied be the numbers of His people, He will have both a temple and a throne—a temple as the great High Priest, and a throne as the King of kings—in every believing heart; and wherever Christ is formed within as "the hope of glory," He becomes the spring and the source of holiness. And this, from the obvious and necessary truth, that the disciple must "be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord;" and when he listens to his Master, the disciple cannot but learn; and when his Lord commands, the servant dare not but obey.

Purity, then, in the Christian, is not only the application of a known truth, but its association also with the truth that is revealed. It is the recognition of God's government, which nature herself declares; but it is the recognition of that government as administered by Christ Jesus. It incorporates with reason's own witness to Deity what a special revelation only could make known: that "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world;" and that to each of ourselves

this must be "the work of God, that we believe on Him, whom He hath sent." And this work must be considered as essential to the salvation of the soul: "he that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved."

Baptism, then, rightly regarded, must be a sign of purity, as well as a symbol of belief. It is, if it be anything better than a mere form, at once a profession of faith and an obligation to practice. It is the visible impression of a seal, which is itself invisible, but by which we are separately and individually marked for God. Now Timothy had long since, like ourselves, been baptised; and he doubtless had been taught to regard baptism as the formal putting away of his sins, and the admission to the benefits and privileges of the covenant of grace. The call now made upon him, therefore, was simply to realise those benefits, and to exercise those privileges. "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me." "From a child," indeed, "he had known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus;" while "the wisdom that is from above, is first pure"—that is the evidence of its real character. If, then, it be asked, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?"—the answer is immediate and decisive: "even by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word." That was the rule for Timothy; that is the rule for ourselves. And hence, at last, we obtain a complete apprehension both of the principle and practice of Christian purity. It is the "exercising ourselves to have a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man;" and the acting upon the persuasion, so powerfully impressed by St. Paul, that "whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do," we are to "do all to the glory of God;" and repeated by another apostle—"that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ."

We then, accordingly, as ambassadors for Christ, say to each young man whom we address, as the apostle said to Timothy—"Keep thyself pure." Keep thyself, as one from the beginning separated and set apart for Christ, from everything which is inconsistent with the allegiance, which thou must owe to Him; with the attachment, which thou oughtest to feel for Him; with the attainment of those blessings, which are the purchase of His blood, and which God will bestow on thee through Him alone. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the

issues of life." Watch against the beginnings of evil. Forewarned as thou art, that many "roots of bitterness" lie deep within the gross and luxuriant soil of a corrupt and degenerate heart, be ever on the watch for their appearance upon the surface: and be ready, with resolute and unsparring hand, as soon as they shall appear, to pluck them up, and to cast them out. Remember, thou art pledged by thy very name, by that very cross which at the beginning was impressed upon thy brow, and which will be a witness for thee, and against thee too, before God—thou art pledged to a warfare, in which thou mayest more easily stand fast and firm against ten thousand adversaries without, than against a single traitor within; and never forget, that if desperate wickedness is the attribute of the enemy, "deceitfulness above all things" is the characteristic of the heart. "He that trusteth in his own heart," saith Solomon, "is a fool;" and no wonder, for as we are more circumstantially admonished in the New Testament, "the spirit that dwelleth in us, lusteth to envy," and "lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." But lust, in the conception, is to be counteracted by an influence, not only contrary, but superior to it; and what that influence is, cannot be more forcibly expressed, than in the words of the apostle John—"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

Thus the language of either Testament is the same. The young man is to "cleanse his way, by taking heed thereto according to His Word:" that is the language of the law; and according to the Gospel, strength is the accompaniment of that Word abiding within. And this will connect itself with the prayer of faith; for "if ye abide in Me," said the Lord Jesus, "and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Now this was the very thing that David did under the law; "I have hid Thy Word in my heart," he said, "that I might not sin against Thee." And this the Lord Jesus virtually enjoined, as a precept of perpetual observance and universal obligation, when He prayed for His disciples—"Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is truth." This, accordingly, constituted, according to the apostle Peter, the distinctive feature of all, who had obtained or should obtain "like precious faith with him:" "seeing

ye have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

Thus far, however, I have spoken of the general principles, which prove Holy Scripture, whether under the dispensation of the law or of the Gospel, to be "profitable for all things." I shall now proceed to the peculiar and personal application of them. Scripture is to be "profitable," severally, "*for doctrine*," as a rule; "*for reproof*," or refutation of error, as a test; "*for correction*," as a standard of right and wrong; "*for instruction in righteousness*," as containing—containing exclusively—the materials by which, and which alone, "the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

"Keep thyself pure," then, young man, as to "*doctrine*," (for doctrine is the foundation of duty,) by taking Holy Scripture, in its plain sense and literal tenor, as the only authoritative rule of faith. Account thy teachers, indeed, to be "ambassadors for Christ," and "stewards of the mysteries of God;" but never forget, that the province of the steward is to dispense only the substance of his master, and the duty of the ambassador is to declare only the purpose of his sovereign. Take nothing upon trust. "To the law, and to the testimony; if we speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in us;" and if thou desirest that "faith should come by hearing," see to it the more circumspectly, that hearing is "by the Word of God." As it is the weekly labour, that endears the Sabbath rest, so it must be the daily study of God's Word, that shall effectuate the Sabbath ministry. The young man—that does not "search the Scriptures," does not know how to judge of truth. Let the Word of God, then, if but for a few moments, occupy the mind before the day of toil begins. Let it be regarded as the opening meal of the soul. Let it be accounted as the spiritual food, in the strength of which we are to endure throughout the day, "and having done all, to stand." And thus regarded, it will be like the manna upon which Israel fed, and which, though it melted when the sun waxed hot, yet sustained the weary frame, till another shower of "angels' food" descended fresh upon the people of God out of heaven.

And not only let Holy Scripture stand

first, but let it stand *alone*. Let it be received, not as "the word of man," but, as to doctrine, the teacher of truth alone. All teaching of men must either be repudiated by it, or comprehended in it. What philosophy may conjecture, is uncertainty; what infidelity may assume, is presumption; what superstition may invent, is folly; what imagination may speculate, is vanity; but what revelation declares is *TAUTUM*. Either the mind of the Infinite hath never found an utterance; or else, (reason herself declares it,) implicit credence, and implicit obedience too, must be accorded, wherever it can be affirmed—"Thus saith the Lord."

Again: we say to the young man, "keep thyself pure" from error, by taking Scripture, in all that seems to require "*reproof*" or refutation, as a test. Whatever is repugnant to thy inherent and instinctive sense of right, whether to be denied as a principle, or to be deprecated as a practice, try it by its agreement or disagreement with God's Word. "Prove all things," that thou mayest "hold fast that which is good." "Great peace have they that love Thy law," said David, "and nothing shall offend them;" nothing shall cause them to err from the truth, or to decline into devious and dangerous paths. For the Word "is a light to thy feet, and a lamp unto thy paths;" and who knows not, that the light is then most conspicuous, as well as most needful, when it is encompassed with the darkness? "As touching the works of men," said David, "by the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer;" and it continued to be his supplication even to the end of life—"Hold Thou up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not;" "hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe, when I have respect unto all Thy commandments." Now there is no other means of safety; there is no other sure clue through the mazes of interest; there is no other adequate guidance through the snares of the world; there is no other sufficient defence against the stealthy approaches of the enemy. "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," is a two-edged sword; it has lightning in its glance, as well as keenness in its edge. It first discloses, and then defeats the enemy; first detects him in his ambush, and then disarms him in the fight. Let the Word be to thee the test of truth; let the Word be the only teacher of doctrine to thyself. So shalt thou "walk safely, and thy foot shall not stumble." Or even if thou slip unwarily, thou shalt not lie prostrate and

powerless in the dust; thine shall still be the language of the prophet—"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me;" I shall not widely err, I shall not greatly fall, for He will "lead me in the paths of righteousness for His own name's sake."

Next, "keep thyself pure" in act, by taking the Word of God "for correction," or setting upright that which hath fallen down, raising what hath been made to stumble through weakness, restoring what hath been damaged or decayed through sin. And here the Word is a standard—a supreme, unerring, unappellable standard of right and wrong; and "correction" is but another name for bringing into harmony or accordance with the Word. For "He hath showed thee, O man, what is right," declared the prophet; and the apostle hath confirmed the Word. In all our relations, domestic or social, public or private, in all conceivable varieties of condition, circumstance, endowment or acquirement, the language of Holy Scripture is the same: "beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good." And the corrective of evil, and the incentive to good, are one—"depart from evil, and do good, and dwell for evermore." Never, then, be persuaded to estimate the moral worth of actions either by man's shallow philosophy, or by his interested policy, or by his fictitious honour, or even by his specious virtue. "The Lord is a God of judgment, and by Him actions are weighed"—weighed in a balance, which contains motives, purposes and principles, as well as the actions themselves. Hence said St. Paul—"The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Oh! then, as you value your eternal welfare, never shrink from the application of the Word of God. It may probe, but it will purify; it may condemn, but it will correct; it may develope the frailty, but it will rectify the sin. It will prepare for "instruction in righteousness," by which "the man of God shall be made perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

"Keep thyself pure," then, lastly, by looking to the Word "for instruction in righteousness;" for instruction, which must extend itself throughout the whole of life, though life were protracted, as of old time, far beyond the narrow limits of

threescore years and ten. On this, however, I will not dwell, in addressing myself peculiarly to the young man. I will rather remind him, that obedience to the truth can only be maintained through the Spirit of the Lord, and that the influence of the Holy Spirit will ever be the answer and the fruit of prayer. To overrate our own knowledge, is ignorance; to walk in our own light, is darkness; to trust in our own strength, is weakness; and the fairest promise will fade as a blighted blossom, and the firmest resolution will melt as the fairy frostwork, if they be not alike formed in dependence upon God, and fortified by prayer to Him. "From Me is thy fruit found," said Jehovah to Ephraim of old. And what is the recorded witness of the most zealous of apostles, the most diligent of labourers, the most devoted of martyrs? "I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

"Keep thyself pure," then, young man, but only by the grace of God in Christ. Once throw aside that buckler, and thou wilt become vulnerable by every weapon of the foe. The "sword of the Spirit" itself can only be kept bright by prayer; and whenever a text is suggested to the mind, whether "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," why should not a prayer be whispered too? Oh! then, forget not the precept of the Lord, "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Prayer is the best encouragement to duty, the most effective antidote to sin. Often has it been said, but the frequency of the saying is justified by the importance of the truth, that a praying soul shall never perish, so long as God is a God that heareth and answereth prayer, so long as Jesus liveth to make intercession for His people, so long as the Spirit is ready to "help our infirmities," and so long as the word of promise remains unchanged, that "whatsoever we shall ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive."

And thus my self-imposed labour is now well-nigh complete. I have shown "wherewithal a young man may cleanse his way," and "keep himself pure;" even "by taking heed thereto according to the Word of God." And now I would, in conclusion, set before every one who hears me to night the solemn alternative—wilt thou "cleanse thy way," or shall God condemn thy soul? Wilt thou "keep thyself pure;" or shall that impurity,

which is now thy shame, becomes thy companion and thy curse throughout eternity? Wilt thou be refined as the pure gold, or cast away as the "reprobate silver?" Wilt thou be as "a tree of righteousness" planted in the garden of the Lord; or barren of all fruits of holiness, and hereafter to be blasted by the lightning of His wrath, "cut down and cast into the fire?"

There is but one alternative; and thou canst not evade it. Sabbaths must be blessings prized, or they will be blessings cursed. Scripture must be a Word that will save, or it will be a word that shall judge. Prayer omitted will provoke vengeance; prayer offered will disarm even justice. God reconciled will be a tender father; God rejected will be "a consuming fire." The very fact of having been born in a Christian country, baptised into a Christian Church, being attendant at this very moment upon the ministry of the Word, places before each of you, as Moses did before Israel, "life and good, and death and evil;" and I too, as Moses did, "call heaven and earth to witness" against every one who hears my voice, that I have set before him to-night "life and death, blessing and cursing;" the crown that cannot fade, and the worm that cannot die; the "kingdom that cannot be moved," and the fire that cannot be quenched. Oh! could I, in doing this, anticipate the choice of the dying hour, not one would leave this Church unconverted, as I am sure that not one will leave it unconvinced. But alas! for man: it is the few, who "are wise, and consider their latter end;" it is the many, who content themselves with breathing the hasty prayer, forgotten as soon as uttered, and perhaps as vain to them as it was to him who uttered it—"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Ah! my brethren, all would die saints; yet many will live sinners, while yet by their own acknowledgment life itself is but "a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," and reason itself tells them, and conscience ratifies the word, that if they die as they are now living, they must perish in their sin.

"Keep thyself pure," then, young man! because "thy breath is in thy nostrils;" because thy sun of life may go down ere it is yet high noon; because pestilence may walk beside thee in the darkness, and destruction waste around thee at the noonday; because thou art sure of death, while thou art not sure of

life; and the reason, to which in other things thou art so disposed to trust, will herself tell thee, that a certainty should have the pre-eminence over a contingency; and that purity of life, except where a miracle of grace shall interpose, as in the case of the thief upon the cross, and the death-bed repentance—that purity of life is essential to the peace of death.

But leaving the duration of life as we find it, wrapped in impenetrable gloom, I would still say, in anticipation of the judgment "keep thyself pure." And so said one, who knew from experience both the perils and the preservatives of youth. "Rejoice, O young man," he said, "in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment;" and unless there be preparation for judgment, rejoicing must, to say the least, be premature. It may be likened to the mirth and revelry of that royal banquet, in which the hand of one who was invisible traced upon the wall, in characters of flame, which made light itself appear as darkness, the destinies that would have been no less certain, had they not been revealed. So the young man, who cannot tell how near he is to judgment, should "keep himself pure," lest it be nigh to him, "even at the doors."

But once more, we add, "keep thyself pure" for the improvement,—yes, and even for the true enjoyment of life. Were it mine to read hearts, I might challenge any one here present, to produce a sin, which did not leave a sting, if only in the consciousness of moral degradation, and the disquietude occasioned by the unavoidable and indelible remembrance of an ever present God. Conscience may be silenced, when light can be extinguished; but not till then. For light, which is the emblem, is also the memorial of Deity; and though "he who doeth evil, hateth the light, and will not come unto the light," yet he knows at all times, by instinctive conviction, though he feels it most amidst the stillness of the night, that the light will come to him—will sooner or later "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart."

But by the observance of this salutary caution, every thing is gained, and nothing can be lost. Time is rightly occupied, and talent profitably improved. Diligence in the practice of business, cou-

pled with uprightness in its principles, rarely fails to prosper, even in a worldly view; and surely, if it do not prosper, it is no slight thing, that failure should not be aggravated and embittered by self-reproach. We do not live under a dispensation of temporal rewards and penalties, and we are not authorised to state that moral purity will preclude disappointment; but we are sure that it will mitigate and temper it, and the "conscience void of offence" will be found more than equivalent to "the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked," and to "riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt." We do not hold out false inducements; religion will not always make the way smooth upon earth; but *it will* make the path sure to heaven. And if the ways of wisdom are not, from the first, "paths of pleasantness," they will be in the end paths of "peace."

Every way, therefore, and on every ground, I say once again to the young man—"Keep thyself pure." "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." It interdicts no rational and safe enjoyment; it enhances every legitimate and permitted pleasure. It sustains under the pressure of inevitable evils, and will surely overrule them all, to the attainment of "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

Make thy choice, then, young man! if it be not already made. But remember, thou art choosing for eternity. Remember, that there is an account to be given before the Judge of quick and dead, both of what I have spoken, and of what thou hast heard.

What thy difficulties may be, what thy peculiar trials and temptations, I know not; whether they may arise from employers, of whom there are too many without human sympathies,—or from associates without moral principle; whether thou art oppressed by that protracted toil, which is the shame and the scandal of this metropolis, extending the day of labour beyond its due limits, and thus even in a land of freedom forging fetters for the mind,—or whether thou art constrained by hard necessity, to uncongenial companionship with the profligate, the wanton, or the profane. What thy difficulties may be, I know not; but one thing I do know—that there is a rule,

a standard which shall guide thee safely through them all. And it may be expressed in few words; oh! let none of you ever forget it. It is this: *wherever God is present, be thou pure.* Wherever the spirit of the world encounters thee, resist it by the spirit of Christ. Remember, in so doing, that "greater is ~~He~~ that is in thee, than he that is in the world." He will conquer for thee, except thou betray thyself. And whatever be the oppression of power, whatever the insolence of wealth, "He that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they."

The crown is worthy of the conflict; the victory is proportioned to the strife. Be thou "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might;" and never shalt thou be vanquished, so long as thou canst invoke Omnipotence by prayer. "Keep thyself pure," by lifting up the heart to God; which thou mightest do in the presence of a thousand foes, or of a thousand fiends. "Keep thyself pure," by recognising the continual presence of Christ thy Lord; by seeking, and by following, the guidance of the Spirit, as suggested to thee by the Word. And then, however thou mayest for a time, through untoward and disastrous circumstances, appear to walk in darkness and to see no light, thou shalt at least be preserved from the "way that seemeth right unto a man," though "the end thereof be the ways of death;" and sooner or later, it shall be with thee according to that most true proverb—"the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day:" unto the day whose perfection is its eternity, for its light shall never darken, and its sun shall never set.

And do any ask, by what right, and upon what authority, I say this? "He that followeth Me," declared the Lord Jesus Christ himself—"he that followeth Me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." And the last word, that we would have impressed upon the memory of every one of you, is this: that "keeping thyself pure," and "following of Christ," are one. He who follows Christ, cannot but be holy, even as his Lord is holy. And sooner or later it shall be found, that holiness is happiness: happiness partial and comparative on earth, perfect and unalloyed in heaven.

SOBER-MINDEDNESS RECOMMENDED TO YOUTH.

You must be considerate and thoughtful, and not rash and heedless. To be sober-minded, is to make use of our reason, in reasoning with ourselves, and in communing with our own hearts; to employ those noble powers and capacities, by which we are distinguished from, and dignified above the beasts, for those great ends for which we were endued with them; that we may not receive the grace of God in them in vain; but, being rational creatures, may act rationally, as behoves us, as becomes us.

You learned to talk when you were children; when will you learn to think? to think seriously, to think to the purpose? Floating thoughts your heads are full of, foreign and impertinent ones: when will you be brought to close and fixed thoughts? to think with concern and application of the great things that belong to your everlasting peace and welfare?

Some have recommended the study of the mathematics, as proper to fix the minds of young people, and bring them to think: I wish any thing would do it, but would much rather it were done by a deep concern about the soul and another world, which, if it once prevail, will effectually fix the thoughts, and to the best purpose; for when once you come to see the greatness of that God with whom you have to do, and the weight of that eternity you are standing upon the brink of, you will see it is time to think, high time to look about you.

Learn to think, not only of what is just before you, which strikes the senses, and affects the imagination, but of the causes and consequences, and reasons of things. To discover truths, compare them with one another, argue upon them, and apply them to yourselves, and to bring them to maturity; not to flatter upon that which comes first into your minds, but upon that which should come first, and which deserves to be first considered.

Multitudes are undone because they are unthinking: Inconsideration is the ruin of thousands, and many a precious soul perishes through mere carelessness. "Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways,"—(Hag. i. 5, 7); retire into your own souls, begin an acquaintance with them; it will be the most profitable acquaintance you can fall into, and will turn to the best account. While you are coveting to see the world, and to be acquainted with it, he not strangers at home.

Take time to think; desire to be alone now and then, and let not solitude and retirement be an uneasiness to you; for you have a heart of your own that you may converse with, and a God nigh unto you, with whom you may have a pleasing communion.

Learn to think freely. God invites you to do so; "Come now, and let us re: " together,"—(Isa. i. 18). We desire not that you should take things upon trust, but inquire impartially into them, as the noble Bereans, who searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so, which the apostles told them. Pure Christianity and serious godliness fear not the scrutiny of a free thought, but despise the impotent malice of a prejudiced one.

There are those, I find, who, under the pretence of being free-thinkers, by insinuations endeavour to shake young people's belief of the Divine authority of the Scriptures, and to undermine all revealed religion, by turning sacred things into jest and ridicule; but they usurp the honourable character of free-thinkers: it does not belong to them; they are as far from the freedom they pretend to, as they are from the sincerity they profess; for it is certain, that pride and affectation of singularity, and a spirit of opposition and contradiction, do as much enslave their thoughts, on the one hand, as an implicit faith and obedience, on the other. While they promise men liberty, they do but deceive them, and under colour of being sole masters of reason, and ridiculing all who agree not with them, they as arbitrarily impose upon men's credulity, as ever popes and counsils did under colour of being sole masters of faith, and anathematizing all who differ from them.

Learn to think for yourselves; to think of yourselves: to think with application. Think what

you are, and what you are capable of; think who made you, and what you were made for; for what end you were endued with the powers of reason, and attended by the inferior creatures; think what you have been doing since you came into the world, of the great work you were sent into the world about, of the vanity of childhood and youth, and how unavoidably the years of them are past away as a tale that is told; and whether, therefore, it be not time, high time, for the youngest of you to begin to be religious, and to enter in at the strait gate.

And as to your particular actions, do not walk, at all adventures, as those do who despise their own ways; but consider what you do before you do it, that you may not have occasion to repent of it afterwards; do nothing rashly, but always speak and act under the government of the great law of consideration. Ponder the path of your feet, that it may be a straight path.

Some people take a pride in being careless; tell them of such and such a thing that they were warned about, they turn it off with this excuse, that for their parts they never heed, they mind not what is said to them, nor ever thought of it since, and so "glory in their shame."

But be not you thus negligent; for then, and not till then, there begin to be hopes of young people, when they begin to set their hearts to all these things that are testified unto them, and to think of them with the reason of men, and the concern they deserve.

You must be cautious, and prudent, and not wilful and heady. The word in the text—"Titus ii. 6."—is the same that is rendered, in verse 3, to be discreet, to behave prudently. You must not only think rationally, but when you have done so, you must act wisely, and so as will be most for your true interest. "Walk circumspectly;" look before you; look about you; look under your feet, and pick your way; "not as fools, but as wise."

David's purpose when he set out in the world was, "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way;" and his prayer was, "Oh! when wilt Thou come unto me?"—(Ps. c. 2). And accordingly we find his purpose performed, and his prayer answered. He "behaved himself wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him,"—(1 Sam. xviii. 14). Those who govern themselves, God will guide; but will justly leave those who love to wander, to wander endlessly.

Put away childish follies with other childish things, and do not all your days think and speak as children. Espouse principles of wisdom; fix to yourselves rules of wisdom, and be ruled by those rules, and actuated by those principles. It is the wisdom of the prudent to understand his own way, his own business, not to censure other people's; and this wisdom will in all cases be profitable to direct what measures, what steps to take.

Youth is apt to be bold and venturesome, and, therefore, resolute and peremptory, to its great prejudice. But be not you so; let reason and conscience, according to the duty of their place, give check to the violence of appetite and passion; let them rectify the mistakes, and overrule the hasty dictates of humour and fancy, and reduce the arbitrary and exorbitant power of those tyrants.

How often does Solomon press it upon the young man he takes under his tuition: "My son, be wise; wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding,"—(Prov. iv. 7). You, who are launching out into the world, must take wisdom to be your pilot, or you are in danger of splitting upon some rock or other: this must be your pillar of cloud and fire, which you must follow the conduct of through this wilderness.

Be diffident of your own judgments, and jealous of yourselves, that you do not take things right, or not take them entire; and for this reason be afraid lest the resolutions, which are the result of your considerations, should prove wrong; and therefore leave room for second thoughts.—*Matthew Henry.*

A SERMON,
BY THE REV. JOSEPH HASLEGRAVE, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH, ISLINGTON, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
JANUARY 12, 1846.

Annal Sermon to the Young.

"Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."—
2 Timothy ii. 7.

We cannot well conceive a scene more interesting, than when Cornelius with his family group welcomed to his house the apostle Peter, and in words of thrilling import addressed him—"Now are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." On such a scene angels, of whom we read that in their presence there is joy over one sinner that repenteth, might well look down with intensest interest, while through the ranks of the virtuous would be called forth the most exquisite delight, even as hell must have trembled at such a sight.

And yet this assembly can hardly be invested with less importance; while in some sort the interest increases, as we contemplate the character, the circumstances, the age, the occasion and the numbers of those gathered together, prepared, we trust, to listen with like seriousness and disposedness of heart, to whatever in the name of God and according to the Word of God, may be addressed them. Yes, this is a solemn hour, and a solemn place, and a solemn meeting. The importance it is impossible to overrate, unless we could duly estimate the value of the soul, and compute the numbers of eternity. The future alone can disclose the bearing of this sacred hour on the imperishable interests of each one present. Oh! that it may be for good. Oh! that it may be an hour, an occasion, never to be forgotten. Oh! that from eternity, whither we are hastening, this precious moment in time may be remembered with joy, and be the subject of everlasting praise. This, my beloved young friends, is my heart's desire and prayer for you. "God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ."

And this anxiety deepens as we call to mind your youth,—the preparation for manhood, the seed-time for eternity; the perils which surround your path; the

strength and developement of principles, which very soon will be confirmed into habit, and determine the character of your future life on earth, and of that which is to come, when time shall be no more; the rapidity with which years roll on, and will quickly terminate the period of your youth, even if not of your existence. For what is your life? Read the monumental tablets of your companions youthful as you, not a few of whom in years past have within these walls met us in like assembly to this, now sleeping beneath the green sod in the churchyard, but their spirits living unto God. And the peradventure that some of you may be soon called to follow, and, if not, the certainty of the dangers of life—its duties and vast responsibilities, fills my soul with unutterable anxiety that I may so speak, and you so hear, that in the great day I may give up my account with joy and not with grief, for that "is not profitable for you."

Give us, then, dear young friends, your devoutest attention, even as you have our most fervent prayers. It is needful, if you desire in the services of the sanctuary ever to get good, to give attention. Simple hearing alone will do you little good; you must take heed both how ye hear, and what ye hear—that the matter be scriptural, and that your own demeanour be acceptable. As St. James bids you, "lay aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls." Throw, indeed, your whole soul into the hearing. "Consider what I say." Do not think, when the service is over, you have done. Do not leave the Church, and think no more about it till you enter again. This is the fault and the ruin of thousands; and "therefore we ought to give the more diligent heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time," the heart, like a leaky vessel!

"let them slip." Let me, then, beg your attentive hearing, and your thoughtful and prayerful consideration, that when the service is ended, the message may not be forgotten. Let the sayings of God sink deep into your heart. And to each, in the words with which the apostle addresses his youthful disciple and son in the faith, would I address you: "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." Ask of Him, as I ask for you, "the hearing ear and the understanding heart;" and blessed shall you be in your deed, and this night shall reveal to the omniscient eye of God, one and another in the spirit and after the example of Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened, attending to the things which are spoken."

I. I begin then, my dear young friends, by calling your attention to a thought which you should never have wholly absent from your minds, namely, For what purpose has life been given you? Simple as the question is, probably many of you may never have given it a serious consideration. This is certain, that the vanities of life are fitted to make you forget the end of life, just as its after cares shut out eternity from the thought of multitudes. But let it not be thus with you. The fact of your existence should itself lead to inquiry, as to the object and design of existence. And in conducting this inquiry, you will of course compare yourselves with whatsoever in the same world has life. You will ask wherefore the difference between you, possessing a rational, thinking, immortal spirit, and the beast that perish. The very possession of faculties such as man is gifted with, but denied to the irrational creation, undeniably establishes his moral obligations, and his responsibility, just as happiness or misery seems the very law of their right or their perverted use. And surely therefore, even the natural conscience seconds the authoritative announcement of Heaven, that man has been created, and his life lent him by God, for no less a purpose than to love, serve and enjoy Him for ever. It is this view of life, in which man's true greatness of character really consists. Every other aspect in which you consider it, is vain, worthless, and to no end. Were it not so, but the utmost of human existence was only to "eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die," there might be justice in the morbid appeal—"wherefore

hast Thou made all men for nought?" But view the business of life, and its pleasures, when they are lawful, as subservient to the higher and infinitely exalted object of serving God in them, supremely loving Him, and delighting greatly in His commands; then is the existence of man worthy the wisdom of the Creator, and he rises in the majesty of being, transcendently above all sublunary things. It is true, that his journey in life is short, but an endless life awaits him; it is true, that his duties and cares on earth are of brief continuance, and that soon to the dust the body will return whence it was taken, but he is reserved for everlasting services, and the spirit will survive long after suns shall have set to rise no more, and heaven and earth shall have fled away. Oh! my young friends, what a thought! Born but yesterday, but to exist for ever. Not one of you can die. That power of feeling; that capacity for pleasure, or for pain; those affections, purified or sinful; that memory, and thought, and mind, will last: and after ages, in their onward movement, will have distanced you from this moment as far beyond the power of thought to follow, as eternity outweighs time, still you will last—the same consciousness, thinking being, only invested with the attribute of unchangeableness, and perfected in ever-accumulating bliss, or ever-deepening aggravated woe. And is this the destiny of your being? for what other purpose, then, can life have been given you, than to prepare for eternity, by loving and serving your Creator now, that you may serve and enjoy Him for ever?

II. From this thought, then, which I beg you seriously to lay to heart, consider, in the next place, what provision God has made for your attaining this glorious end of your being.

Had man never sinned, then whether on earth or in heaven, he must have been happy in God, because like to God. But alas! sin has entered "into the world, and death by sin;" and that which David said of himself is equally true of all: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." As born therefore in sin, and inheritors of a sinful nature, "we are all children of wrath even as others." And such must we have lived and died and have perished, "but God, who is rich in mercy," "so loved the world, that He gave His only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "He died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." He liveth to "save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." "In Him we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin;" and by His Spirit, creating in us a new heart, and renewing a right spirit within us, we are enabled, even as we are privileged, to serve Him in the Gospel of His Son, that we may enjoy Him for ever. And the provision He has made for our pardon, our sanctification, our peace, our glory, is abundant. "It hath pleased the Father, that in Christ all fulness should dwell." In Him He has expressed His fatherly good-will toward us. He has not merely, in so many words, said that He loved us, but in the sufferings of the Saviour for us told us how He loves us. He has not only given His promise, but pledged His oath; and as if to make an impression on our hearts through our senses, He has by His Son Jesus Christ, ordained visible seals and assurances of His grace in the sacraments which He has commanded. By one of those sacraments most, if not all of you present, have been received into visible membership with His Church; called into a state of salvation; promises freely given of God to you in that sacrament, which make over to you grace for every duty, strength for every requirement, pardon for every sin, and acceptance for yourselves and your services through Christ Jesus. God therein promised to be your Father, Christ your Saviour, the Spirit your Sanctifier, even as in that covenant transaction you were baptised into the name of each; thereby grace manifesting its richness, in making it possible for the holy God to enter into covenant with an unclean thing, and in making provision for its uncleanness being taken away. And this He does before you promise to Him; nay, as the very ground and warrant of your promise. The renunciation of sin you are pledged to; the resistance to Satan, and the overcoming the world, not only because it is your duty and your interest, but because both the grace sufficient to will and to do is yours for acceptance; weak in yourselves, you may be "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." And whatever else, my dear young friends, baptism may have proved to you—for large is its grace if there were faith to receive it—it has at least placed

the vows of God upon you, and has given you a relation right to the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. By it ye are incorporated into the body of Christ's Church, ye are planted within God's vineyard, within that sacred enclosure on which the dews of heavenly grace descend, and where the Lord commands His blessing, even life for evermore. It is but right, therefore, that to you we should look for fruit; ye are not like the tree in the wide waste, but planted, as it were, by the water side, to bring forth fruit in its season. Moreover, to you pertain the promises, made yours by a sealing ordinance; and therefore, in an especial manner may you plead their fulfilment, and seek all the blessings which they contain. There is not a sinner, but when the Gospel comes to him on the warrant of its general promise, he may pray in faith, and shall surely receive; but to you God has set His seal to the promise, to be your God—to be all which His perfections can be to you, of grace to help, and power to save; and this particular promise you can carry to the mercy-seat—and with assured confidence plead—"I am Thine, O save me; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid; Thou hast loosed my bonds." "Never to the seed of Jacob hast Thou said, Seek ye Me in vain;" I therefore come seeking Thy promised mercy. I feel my sinfulness—I want pardon. I feel my weakness—I want strength. "When I would do good, evil is present with me." But I am Thine, and Thou hast promised pardon, grace, and strength. Oh! let it be mine, and in my weakness make perfect Thine own, an 'to me, promised strength.' This is baptismal grace, and this would prove indeed baptismal blessedness. Let us encourage you to seek it, my beloved young friends. Some of you, we thank God, have done so; would that the desire this night might be quickened in all your hearts. Too soon you cannot begin, too late you may. This brings me to another branch of the subject, which I pray you to consider.

III. The indispensable necessity for the real possession and experience of this inward and spiritual grace, of which baptism in the outward form is the sign, if yours be the happy portion to fulfil the high and blessed purpose for which your life has been given you.

There is nothing on which Scripture lays greater stress than this—"That in Christ

Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." And as might be expected, the Church of which you are members, so emphatically a scriptural Church, is distinguished for nothing more than this discriminating standard. It does indeed honour God by faith in the promise, but then it does solemnly charge on the consciences of all her members, that a new creature, the evidence of regenerating grace, is alone qualified for the service of God on earth, and by a daily renewing of the Holy Ghost is alone meetening for the fruition of God in heaven. A sacrament is only efficacious in them that worthily receive the same; and, on the principle, therefore, that a sacrament of grace may be administered without conveying the grace of the sacrament, she never ceases to ask and to demand the only evidence of a regenerated and sanctified condition, in the exercise of the graces of repentance and faith. And this she does from the first dawn of reason to the latest pulse of life; and no one therefore of her pastors or her people can be ignorantly, or otherwise than wilfully, deceiving themselves or one another with "a name to live while they are dead," or confound what she everywhere so emphatically asserts to be distinct—the sign and the thing signified—the outward rite and the inward grace. I stand, therefore, my beloved young friends, in my appeal to your consciences this night, to say none other things than what ye read and acknowledge; and I trust shall acknowledge even to the end. I ask you, then, for the evidence of a new nature, telling you that nothing else can avail. Unless made partaker of the Divine nature, you cannot overcome the corruption that is in the world through lust. Without spiritual union with Christ you have no power for His service, and as little relief. Decent you may be in your external behaviour; respectful in your walk in life; observant of the form of godliness: but one thing you lack—and lacking that, you have no security against the appalling dangers on the right hand and on the left, while the only end is left unanswered, for which with truth and reason you can ever say—"We bless Thee for our creation." To enjoy God, you must serve Him; to serve Him, you must love Him; to love Him, you must be born of Him; for "love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." You need not be told with what cheerfulness you can discharge a

duty which you love to discharge, and how painful the performance if you loathe and dislike it. And it is so with all the duties of religion towards God and towards man; love them, and you will delight to do them; but love them you cannot, till with a true penitent heart and lively faith, you have yielded yourselves to God, and become His workmanship, "created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that ye should walk in them."

IV. And this introduces another thought of vast importance. "Consider," then, "what I say," as to the fitting period for making this surrender of yourselves to God. When should it be done? Our answer is, it cannot be done too early. Were the Christian families of the land fully impressed with the mercies, which in covenant are made over to their children, they would believingly teach this so soon as their dedicated infants are able to learn. They would point heavenwards the first emotions, and try to direct the first lisplings of their beloved offspring from a father on earth to a Father in heaven. If an infant be capable of grace, it is capable of love; and with the testimony of Jesus—"Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven"—assuredly, they would feel that too soon they could not teach their children whose they are and whom they ought to serve. And though perhaps they may smile at the first feeble effort, and the lisping tongue, Heaven would rejoice

"When the sweet music of the blest
Is echoed from an infant's breast,
The Lord of heaven delights to hear."

It is thus, we believe, with some, who from the earliest infancy give signs of grace, and can "heartily thank their heavenly Father for having called them to this state of salvation." It seems to have been thus with Timothy, who from a child had learnt and loved the Holy Scriptures. And instances like these beautifully illustrate the deposit and the development of grace, as taught in that parable of our Lord. "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches." But my dear young friends, our appeal

is to you ; and what we want to ascertain is, the existence of the grace by the development of its fruit. We are not careful to inquire about any particular or marked event in the experience of the past, as evidence to you that your heart is given to God ; but our question is—Is it given ? Repentance is the habit of life—a turning from sin and a turning to God, the hatred of every false way, and the pursuance of universal holiness : is that repentance yours ? Faith, is the reposing of the soul on Christ, and the walking in the blessed steps of His most holy life : is that faith yours ? Obedience, is the doing of the will of God from the heart, and to His glory : is that obedience the tenor and the course of your life ? If to these questions truth compels you to answer in the negative, then when mean you to begin ? What period of your life to come, as it has not been done in your life past, do you intend to seize, for the purpose of choosing God to be your God ? Whatever answer conscience is whispering to you, our answer, in the name of God, is—Now ! or never ! They are fearful words ; but they may be true ones. In our ignorance of the future, we can only deem them as absolutely true. This night, your soul may be required ! Then, the future will be too late. And the truth startles us the more, as we turn to inquire what is the voice of God in the Scripture, in respect to the future. And first, every proffer of mercy is limited, to the present : “ Now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation.” Next, it employs awful language, in asserting the probability that the future will never find a man better disposed to accept mercy, if he accepts it not now : “ My Spirit shall not always strive with man :” “ He is joined to his idols, let him alone.” And thirdly, the Scripture, speaking of the future, in respect to the rejectors of present salvation, changes promises into threatenings : “ Because I have called, and ye refused ; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded ; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof : I also will laugh at your calamity ; I will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind ; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer ; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me ; for that they hated knowledge, and

did not choose the fear of the Lord.” And turning from Scripture to universal experience—from words to facts—the solemn truth—*Now, or never*, gathers yet more awful interest. Where are the conversions to God, in old age ? Where are the conversions to God, on the sick and dying bed ? Where are the conversions in the prime of life—when the cares and the pleasures and the lust of other things entering in, choke the Word, and the hearer becometh unfruitful ? Experience proves, that he who “ remembers” not “ his Creator in the days of his youth,” remembers Him not at all. He who lets go early impressions, is in danger of letting them go for ever. And this is no more than what, from the very nature of things, we might expect. We are not likely to love to-morrow what we hate to-day, or loathe the delight which captivates us now. We rise as we lie down, and each day is but an epitome of a whole life ; and the probability, therefore, is, that what I am now, if spared to threescore years and ten, I shall then be, only much more confirmed. Oh ! then, dearly beloved, procrastinate not ; delay no longer. A moment's delay, may prove an eternity lost. “ Seek the Lord while He may be found ; call ye upon Him while He is near.” Hear His voice : “ Wilt thou not from this time cry unto Me ?” and answer it—“ My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth.” Rest not satisfied because you have been religiously educated, unless you are personally religious. “ See, I have set before you this day life and death, blessing and cursing.” By the love we bear to you, by the interests at stake, by the cries and tears and blood of the Redeemer, by the strivings of the Spirit, by the mercy of God, make your choice ; make it wisely, make it for ever. And on the heart's tablet be this the inscription :—“ I have said, Thou art my portion, O Lord.”

V. One other thought, and with which I shall conclude. Consider the happiness of a life thus early given to God, to be spent in His service, to end in His glory. “ There be many, that say—Who will show us any good ? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us.” “ Thy favour is better than life.” Whatever, my young friends, the worldly and the voluptuary may, in their ignorance, have to object against the rule of a holy life, even they have not been back-

ward to confess the more than emptiness of earth's pleasures. As one of them testifies—"I am tired and sick of everything in life; there is no joy to be found in earth." But religion inspires with better hopes, and fills with richer contentment. "To me to live, is Christ; to die, is gain. Oh! for such experience and such blessedness!

"'Twill save you from a thousand snares,
To mislead religion young."

"By the words of Thy lips, I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Satan may assault, but he shall not prevail. You may have a long continuance in the world; but the Saviour's intercession, and the Father's love, will keep you from the evil.

Moreover, early religion will make you abundantly useful to others. You will be the propagators of mercy, not of crime; the alleviators, not the aggravators of misery; co-workers with God, not the agents of Satan. And for yourselves you will be accumulating a glorious reward. Your treasure is in heaven. You have there laid it, safe from the hand that can steal, or the principle that can corrupt. Rich in grace, you shall be rich in glory. Bearing forth much fruit on earth, your Father will deem Himself to have been glorified by you; and in heaven you shall be glorious in Him, lifted up for ever; eternally approximating in holiness and in happiness the source of all creation and of all blessedness, whose you are, and whom you will for ever serve. And happiness on earth and happiness in heaven like this, deserves it not the first, the best, the earliest, and ther- are the most grateful offering of the heart to God? Early piety is, if possible, an enhancement of the very gift of heaven.

There is, indeed, much truth as well as beauty in that fine imagery of an old writer, in which, illustrating what he designates "strife in heaven," he describes two of the ransomed spirits contending before the listening throng which could lay claim to greatest mercy, in being the greatest monument of grace. Each argued his case. The one stepped forward, and contended that none owed more to mercy than he. In yonder world, he had lived threescore years and ten; he had grown grey-headed in iniquity, and yet, as an exception to the all but universal law, that men generally die as they live, grace had singled him

out, plucked him as a brand from the burning, led him on the very threshold of eternity, in penitence and prayer, to his too-long forgotten Saviour, in whose atoning and cleansing blood he was washed, and by whose Spirit he was renewed and sanctified, and, at last, by the mercy of God, admitted a sharer of heaven's joys, an associate with the saints in light. Contemplating the past with the present, looking back to time spent in forgetfulness of God, and looking forward to eternity, to be employed in His praise, and connecting this with the narrow escape, the "being saved, yet so as by fire;" can there be one of all the ransomed spirits surrounding the throne, a monument of greater mercy, a subject of richer grace?

The other saint stepped forward, and thus began. 'Mercy shines indeed conspicuously in such a miracle of grace, and unutterable must be the everlasting gratitude of such a saved spirit; but that salvation, great as it was, falls short of what was freely given to me. Methinks that I am yet a far greater monument of grace. In yonder world, I too lived threescore years and ten; I grew grey-headed; but oh! the mercy! my hoary hairs were found in the way of righteousness. Mercy gave me pious parentage; mercy conducted me in helpless infancy, and placed me in the arms of Jesus. Mercy taught my infant lips to lispen His precious name, and guided my infant footsteps to His sanctuary. The seed of grace early sown in my tender heart, was preserved, and nurtured, and watered from above. The sacred principle strengthened with my strength and grew with my growth. I was saved a thousand sins, and spared a thousand sorrows. In some sort, (though, alas! most unworthy!) I was strengthened in God's service, for the performance of duties, now no longer necessary, though the fruits remain; and at last, when I came to die, an abundant entrance was administered unto me, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I, therefore, am the greater monument of mercy, just as I have had the greater salvation, even a double salvation; saved from sin in yonder world, and saved in heaven at last.'

The listening throng awarded the palm to him that had the double salvation. "Remember, therefore, thy Creator, in the days of thy youth,"

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

A SERMON, BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A.

PREACHED AT CAMDEN CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
JANUARY 19, 1845.

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light."—Matthew xvii. 1, 2.

"SPEAKING to the eye by sensible representations," observes Archbishop Newcome, "is a very ancient kind of language." He might almost have called it the first alphabet of mankind. The "trees" of Paradise were silent ordinances. The types of the law were prophetic facts. The dreams which flitted before patriarchs and holy men, were all sermons to the eye; whilst in every act of our Lord's brief, but eventful history, there is symbolised some sacred verity, of the utmost moment to the interests of the Church and of mankind.

Christ's doctrine was in His life. He preached as an unconscious babe. He was "the light of the world," even in His obscurity at Nazareth. In the solitary wilderness, He had unborn thousands for His audience. All His sufferings were homilies; and in His cross we read the fresh-distilled speech of Heaven.

Thus Christ's life would have been a succession of mysteries, even if there had been no mystery in His nature. Men must have allowed, that there were the manifested attributes of a twofold nature, even if they had "stumbled at the stumbling-block" of incarnate God. They must have witnessed in Christ menial abasement one day, and more than angelic grandeur the next. They must have seen the power to create food for thousands, in One who at times had not wherewith to sustain Himself. The scorn of men was also the angels' adoration. The prey of death was also the Lord of life. Christ had outshone the sun on Tabor, before the sun withdrew from him on Calvary.

Hence it was a very pardonable conceit of some of our older Divines, to say that Christ's whole life was the true transfiguration; and that the transient brightness of Tabor was only an adumbration of His true and essential glory. For it is quite true, that Christ's natural appearance was among the enthroned assemblies of heaven; giving to the temple its light, to the world its law, and to the large company of immortals their portion of unchanging blessedness. He was only transfigured,

or metamorphosed, when He clothed Himself in the attributes of our poor humanity; when He "became flesh, and dwelt among us;" when He lived as man, that man might live with Him; and died for us, that we might never die.

Still, since as a man He was destitute of all "form or comeliness;" since men habitually, as it were, "hid their faces from Him," and "esteemed Him not;" the supernatural display of His glory, recorded in our second Lesson of this morning's service, must have afforded to the disciples matter of abundant consolation, although at first we find it filled them with a stupefying and fearful amazement.

We propose, therefore, with the Divine blessing, to meditate this morning on our blessed Lord's transfiguration: considering that sublime event, first, in the time and manner of its manifestation; secondly, in its chief design, as connected with the Gospel dispensation; and, thirdly, in its subsidiary moral uses, towards establishing and comforting the souls of all disciples.

And may a beam of that light, which once irradiated the heights of Tabor, shine into all our hearts, for the Redeemer's sake!

I. We consider, first, the circumstances and manner of our Lord's transfiguration.

The incident itself is related by no less than three evangelists, each with some circumstance not noted by the rest; and therefore, all their accounts must be studied, in order to a full understanding of the import of this appearance itself. They all three, however—Matthew, Mark and Luke—agree in placing this event about a week after that memorable conversation our Lord had held with His disciples, on the decreed and inevitable certainty of His coming death and passion; and they still further concur, in making the event to be immediately preceded by those words of our Lord—"But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God." These "some stand-

ing here," therefore, would appear to be Peter and James and John; who, though they had been eye-witnesses to so many of His wondrous works, were to behold a more signal attestation to the fact of His being, not the Sent of God only, but His incarnate manifestation also.

The solemn event is ushered in by an act, which, as it was needful to all important works by our great Exemplar, should always be deemed an indispensable preparative by us. Jesus first withdrew "to a mountain to pray." Men "have not, because they ask not." They rush into the thick of spiritual encounters, without asking a blessing from the God of battles. God may call us up into a mountain to show us His glory, or a permitted temptation may lead us there, soliciting us to covetousness and pride; but we shall neither be puffed up with Tabor's dangerous brightness, nor lured by the glory of the kingdoms of this world, if we always ask God's counsel first. Mountains may be exceeding high, but they will not be dangerous to us, if we only pray before we climb.

Since this manifestation, however, was not for His own glory, but for the encouragement of His disciples, our Lord would not go to the mount of transfiguration alone, but takes with Him three chosen witnesses. Too much publicity had been incompatible with that shrinking retiredness of character, which was the leading feature of our Lord's public ministry; and to have been entirely without witnesses, would have defeated the evangelical intentment of the transfiguration to us. Wherefore our Lord would take three—why not more than three—or why these three in particular—may not be for us to know. Suffice it, that as "in the mouth of two or three witnesses was every word to be established" under the law, so should there not be less than three, to witness this Divine attestation to the authenticity of the Gospel.

But let us now go up the hill, and "see this great sight," which God the Lord will show us. "Jesus was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." He from whom men had "hid their faces," was now so arrayed in superhuman brightness, that they were compelled to veil them. The "root out of a dry ground" now towers above the cedars of Libanus. For a moment, the star of Bethlehem turns its bright side towards earth; and men were to have a glimpse of that sun, whose full-orbed

glory was the life and the light of angels.

The nature of this wondrous change lies, of course, beyond the ken of mortals; save only that it was not a change of substance of our Lord—not the re-assumption of that Divinity, which He laid aside when He forsook the skies, because He lived some time afterwards in the flesh, and in that flesh was still to die. We can regard it, therefore, only as an upper garment of glory, thrown over the tabernacle, in which for a season He had been content to enshrine and conceal His Godhead. Heaven was written upon His countenance, and each opening pore beamed with indwelling Deity.

It took not long to weave this fabric of glory. In an instant of time, Christ passed from Calvary in anticipation, to Tabor in all its manifested splendour. And in like manner shall His people "arise and put on their beautiful garments;" and "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," shall these our vile bodies be changed, that they may be "fashioned like to His glorious body," when "our faces shall shine as the sun," and our raiment, borrowed from Christ's spiritual wardrobe, like His, shall "be white and glistering."

"And behold," continues the evangelist, "there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him." Here we have Moses, the founder of the law, and Elias, the head of "the goodly fellowship of the prophets," bearing their united testimony to the superior dignity of Him, whose dispensation was to be one of "grace and truth." And these "appeared in glory" with Him. Elijah had been translated into heaven; so that he must have appeared in his transformed body. Moses was a disembodied spirit; so that his was the permitted assumption of a bodily form. Rightly were they selected as companions of Christ on this occasion; for in their earthly course they had been types of Him. With Him, they had fasted forty days in the wilderness; with Him, they had endured shame and scorn in delivering their respective messages to the world; and with Him, they were conveyed to their mansions of immortality in a way, which had exempted them from the common end of mortals. But God knows how to gather in His own elect. Let the whirlwind bear away "the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof;" let the people mourn and search for the lost sepulchre of Moses; both will gladly appear at the bidding of Him, who gave them their life immortal, and to

whom at last "shall the gathering of the redeemed be."

But Moses and Elias, we are informed, "talked with Him." Had we not been told by another evangelist, how interested we should have felt in the subject matter of this heavenly discourse! But *we are* told. And what was it? Was their discourse of the glory Christ had with His Father, when He spake worlds into being, and bade the new-made sun to drive darkness from "the face of the deep?" Was it of the impatient joy, with which heaven's high hosts were awaiting His return to the sanctuary of immortality? No; such were not fitting themes for a time of exaltation, transient as it was. Their converse with Christ was of the coming passion: the dark hour of agony, the raging thirst, the cries and faintings of redemption's finished work. For, as Luke tells us, "they spake of His decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

Learn, brethren, from hence, what are your proper lessons for a time of prosperity. These are, not to consider how you may rise higher, but to reflect how soon you may fall lower. Nay, in so far as worldly things are concerned, how soon you *must* fall. How few days may convey you from Tabor to Jerusalem; from visions of transporting bliss, to scenes of sorrow and desolateness and death, till all your glory is departed, and all the glistening of your raiment is transfigured into the paleness of a shroud.

Seldom, indeed, do we like to think on such topics in the day of prosperity. Death's heads at feasts, and coffins borne on triumphal cars, tell too plainly the great truth of earth's evanescence; we would fain keep up the delusion, that "the fashion of this world" never "passeth away," that its treasures will never fade, and its "fine gold" undergo no change. But Christ had not so learned prosperity; and we trust, "ye have not so learned Christ." The glory He was then manifesting, was, He knew, to be done away; and was to be succeeded by a sunless desolateness of soul, where the light would be as darkness. And in like manner should we, "in all times of our wealth," as well as "in all times of our tribulation," think of our latter end; "speak of our decease;" when all that we shall ask either friends or foes to give us, will be a thin slip of our parent earth, for our mansion and our resting-place. Brethren, we do not *dig* graves by thinking of them, nor *hasten* our decease by talk-

ing of it; but it enables us to bear with more humility the brightness of Tabor, to remember the work which in a few days or years we shall have to "accomplish at Jerusalem."

"But Peter and they that were with Him," St. Luke tells us, "were heavy with sleep; and when they were awake, they saw His glory." Christ exhibited to His disciples His highest glory, and His lowest abasement; and at both times "He found them sleeping." How much need have we to guard against spiritual lethargy, when these, whom Paul calls the pillars of the Church, were unable to watch with Christ "for one hour!" But though the flock may sleep, the Shepherd of Israel never sleeps. He is all the while providing visions of blessedness for us when we wake; and if the exhausted flesh overcome the "willing spirit," He will gently arouse us from our slumbers, lest we sleep on too long, and the glory pass away from the mountain.

Still, we have need to guard against drowsiness, particularly when we are with God on the mount. The hill of Zion has its scenes of glory, as well as the hill of Tabor. And many of its blessed visions, it is to be feared, have passed unseen and unimproved away from this your Zion, because you were heavy with sleep: perhaps that worst form of sleep—the sleep with open eyes.

It would be difficult to collect the thoughts of Peter from the language he used, when he awoke and beheld the supernatural spectacle. His words exhibited a strange incoherence of feeling, of which perhaps the Gospel written under his own dictation—I mean that of St. Mark—supplies the best explanation; namely, that he was so overcome with fear, that he wist not what he said. For "Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."

"And while he yet spake, a cloud overshadowed them;" "a bright cloud," as the text calls it; "and they feared, as they entered into the cloud." God who dwelleth in light inaccessible, light too dazzling for mortal gaze, can be seen only through a cloud. "He holdeth back the face of His throne, and spreadeth His cloud upon it." But here it was "a bright cloud:" not such as gathered round the summit of Horeb, not such as constituted the "blackness and darkness" of Sinai; but a cloud through which, as "in a glass darkly," the saints catch a glimpse

of God, "making the clouds His chariot," and darkness a medium of transmitting light.

"And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, *This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.*"

II. This brings us to the second topic we proposed for consideration: namely, the chief design of our Lord's transfiguration, as illustrative and confirmatory of the dispensation of "grace and truth."

We remark, then, that the chief design of this wonderful appearance was, the solemn inauguration of Christ as the Lord's anointed: His formal induction into office, as both the Teacher and the Redeemer of the world. The designation of prophets to their sacred office, under the former dispensation, was often accompanied with circumstances peculiarly solemn and sublime. Moses received his commission from amidst the burning, but unconsumed bush. Isaiah was separated to the work, by a vision of God "high and lifted up," with a train which "filled the temple," and encircled by veiled and adoring seraphs. And Ezekiel was not sent forth to prophecy to a rebellious nation, until from the banks of the river of Chebar, he had been permitted to see the whirlwind, and the brightness, and the wheels of God's chariot rolling, and the ministers of His providence flapping their anointed wings, till "their noise was like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech." Yet in none of these transactions do we see any thing like the impressiveness and majesty, which mark the solemn transfiguration of our Lord. These men, as servants, only saw the brightness of the Father's glory; Christ, as a Son, *was* Himself that brightness. These "did exceedingly fear and quake" at the awful solemnities, with which they found themselves unexpectedly surrounded; Christ, on the contrary, prepares for His transfiguration, in calm and conscious majesty puts on His robe of light, and holds high converse with two glorified spirits of the past on "the things which should be hereafter."

Thus was Christ more openly sealed and sanctified to the prophetic and priestly office. Angels had announced His birth, and descending spirits had put honour on His baptism; but Christ must be shown to have more glory than Moses, more of authority and power than all "the goodly fellowship of the prophets." The times

were past, in which "God had spoken to our fathers by the prophets;" He would now "speak to us by His Son." "These," He seems to say, "were My servants, whom 'at sundry times and in divers manners,' I instructed to make known My will to the people; but He whom you now see, radiant in all His transfigured splendour—"this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."

A second part of the design of the transfiguration, we may take to be, a direct and authoritative confirmation of former dispensations, which God had made to mankind. God may speak through many voices, but He never uses more than one language. His truth is an indestructible and unchanging unity throughout all periods of time. Christ was preached in the legal types; Christ was embodied in each prophetic vision: so that by the act of calling Moses and Elias to converse with Him, our Lord virtually puts a seal to their united testimony. As if saying to His disciples—"Ye believe in the precepts of the law, ye believe in the writings of the prophets, and in all this ye do well, for these are they which testify of Me; I was the life of their lifted serpent, I was the water from their amitten rock, I was the "fountain opened" for the people's sins, and I was the devoted Victim on whom should be laid the iniquities of all. I am "the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world;" and Moses and Elias were only sent "to prepare My way before Me."

Moreover, a third great truth, symbolised by this miraculous appearance, was, that "the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things," was in the fulness of time to be done away. For "when the disciples lifted up their eyes," says the evangelist, "they saw no man, save Jesus only." There was no Moses, no Elias. They had borne their willing witness, and had departed, leaving Christ the sole and all sufficient object of human confidence and adoration. Moses had laid up his rod; the moth had consumed the prophetic mantle of Elijah; and the Saviour of all the ends of the earth was come, and Christ was to be all in all:

III. We note now, in the last place, a few subsidiary moral uses, answered by this solemn transaction.

1. And of these the first benefit we note is, that it was an assurance direct from heaven, conveyed to the disciples in

a form which their senses could not mistake, and before witnesses sufficient to "establish every word," that that Jesus whom they preached, was the true, and recognised, and accredited Son of God. Such was the effect, we find, produced on the mind of the apostle Peter; for, referring to this very event in his General Epistle, he says—"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy Mount."

2. Another great truth, which received a mighty confirmation on the mount of Tabor, was that of the soul's immortality. This doctrine, though set forth with progressive clearness after the time of the Babylonish captivity, had not, as you know, been made so prominent an article of faith under the elder dispensation, as it became under the brighter disclosures of the Gospel. But here was a proof which their eyes saw, and their ears heard, that all believers in Christ, after being removed from this world of sin, whether swept by the whirlwind in a chariot of fire or reposing their bones in an undiscovered sepulchre, should yet live again, live in glory, live in blessedness, live to take an interest in the concerns of the world that gave them birth, and hold converse with Him, who accomplished for them a full and free redemption.

Let us not, then, be fearful or ignorant, brethren, "concerning them which are asleep," neither "sorrow as those that have no hope." Moses and Elias were but the resurrection first fruits of their respective dispensations, enjoying the earnest of their purchased immortality, and "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." But on the Tabor which is above, in the brighter transfigurations of the last day, there shall appear, not Moses and Elias only, not Peter and James and John only, but all who have "believed on Jesus through their word;" their countenance "shining as the sun," their raiment all "white as the light," and all talking with Jesus, not of His sufferings, but of His triumphs; not of His dying pains, but of His risen glory—a glory which they, and our-

selves also, shall both behold and share. 3. Again: there was, in the bright scene of Tabor, an evidence of the nature of our glorified humanity, and of the certainty of our mutual recognition in the world to come. We know not "what we shall be; but we know, that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like Him." The members shall be as the Head; the children shall be as the Heir; their "vile bodies changed," purified, "fashioned like unto His body," at whose superhuman brightness the disciples "were sore afraid."

We think it proves too, that our knowledge of individuals shall be retained in heaven. The disciples did not see two spirits only, conversing with Jesus; but they saw Moses *as* Moses, and Elias *as* Elias. We are not told by what means the disciples arrived at a knowledge of their personal identity, but the history supposes that they had this knowledge; and the evangelical purposes of the transfiguration would not have been answered without it. Dives "saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." And the same recognition, which augments the bitterness of hell, will sweeten the blessedness and joy of heaven.

Our concluding improvement of this glorious scene shall be, the encouragement it affords, in the reflection that whether in heavenly glory or in earthly shame, Christ is one with us. He who "was afflicted in all our afflictions," would have us glorified in all His triumphs. If He would have us "suffer," He would also have us "reign with Him." Tabor shall be ours, as well as Calvary; and a crown shall grace the brow, which for His sake may have been pierced with thorns.

May, then, the brightness of Tabor show you the "dark places" of all your hearts. May it make you "sore afraid" with the sight of your own guilt and danger. And though from the mount you must go to the valley, where in penitence you will weep, and from the valley will go to the garden, where in faith you must pray; yet hard by is the Mount of Olives, whence, when your "good fight is fought," and your Christian race is run, ye shall ascend with more than transfigured brightness, and sit down with Moses and Elias, and Peter and James and John, and talk of the benefits your souls have received on account of that "decease, which Christ accomplished at Jerusalem."

THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS.

A SERMON,

BY THE HON. AND REV. H. MONTAGU VILLIERS, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BLOOMSBURY, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
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"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God."—1 Corinthians i. 18.

IF we look at the whole of the context in this chapter, we can have but little doubt of the relative value of the ordinances of God. There is no question, that we are bound to administer the rite, the holy sacrament, of baptism; for Jesus Christ himself has said—"Go ye, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." But there can be little doubt, I think, which is the great instrument of converting souls. And it is to this, that every Christian minister ought especially to look. His feeling ought to be, in addressing his people—"I must, God being my helper, convert souls to Him." The feeling of all his people ought to be—"If I am not converted, I must seek for conversion; if I am converted, I must pray for the conversion of others too.

Now we see here what is the real, the most general and common instrument for converting souls. For, in the seventeenth verse, the apostle says, "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel."

And then, enlarging upon this, he says—"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God."

From these words I purpose considering, first of all, what is meant by "the preaching of the Cross;" secondly, the manner of its reception by the world; and lastly, the end of the different hearers.

I. What is "the preaching of the Cross?"

Now, from the general language, that it is the preaching which "unto us that are saved, is the power of God," we can have but little doubt, that it is only another expression for the Gospel itself. For if you look to the first chapter of the epis-

tle to the Romans, and the sixteenth verse, St. Paul there says—"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Then "the preaching of the cross" is the preaching of "the Gospel of Christ."

But what does preaching "the Gospel" mean?

It is not merely declaring glad tidings; it must have reference also to the wants of man. Therefore I should say, that preaching the Gospel implies, first of all, explaining to every hearer the fall of man: that he is a lost, a ruined sinner, deserving of eternal condemnation from the hour of his birth. It implies, also, setting forth the holiness of God; that God is not "such an one as we are," but that He with whom we have to do, is, like His own law, "holy and just and good," and that His eyes are "too pure to look upon iniquity;" and therefore, that on the one hand there is man a fallen sinner, and on the other hand there is God a holy and a just Being. It is proclaiming, also, the sentence which God has passed against sinners; for we are bound to remind all, that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die;" we are bound to tell you all, that God cannot receive any sinner into heaven, if he continue as he was born at first. Then, we must tell you of the truth of God; that God, when He has spoken, will surely perform; that if we are able to take to ourselves the comfort of the language at the beginning of this chapter, that "God is faithful, by whom we were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord"—if not one thing will fail us of all the blessings which God has promised—so neither will any one thing fail, of those threatenings, which He has pronounced against those who neglect His Word and forsake His law and commandments. We set before you

these fundamental truths, as part of the preaching of "the Gospel," in order that you may fully see the state of man, and what he must require before he can stand with hope at the judgment-seat of Christ.

But we are to tell you, also, that a supply for these wants has been graciously provided; that God, in His eternal counsel, planned the salvation of man; that there was, therefore, the supply determined upon, before there was any demand. And that this is provided for sick people only; and for all who feel that their souls are sick, there is such a supply, that they may be made whole. God, indeed, has not provided any remedy for those who are righteous, or even for those who are thinking themselves righteous; "the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

We then set before you the character of that supply; that it is, in one word, in Jesus Christ himself. He is the means of salvation. I speak, therefore, of the sufferings of Jesus; of Christ having "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." I might dwell upon the extent of those sufferings—upon all that He endured from the cradle to the grave; but it is sufficient to say, that the cross of Christ is implied in "the Gospel of Christ," and therefore all that He endured is among the "glad tidings" which are to be made known to man. There is also, connected with this, the truth of the satisfaction that has been provided for us in the resurrection of Christ; that as He suffered and paid the price, so He "rose again for our justification," manifesting that what He had endured was sufficient to redeem us. But the sinner must also have some confidence, that when he is once aware of his wants, he may be bold in pleading with God; and therefore I speak, again, of the mediation and intercession of Christ; of His now being at the right hand of God, there pleading for us, presenting His own sacrifice, and entreating mercy for all who seek Him in sincerity and in truth.

Surely, then, this "Gospel" is "worthy of all acceptance." So wonderful is the theme, that you will remember, in one of the accounts of that transfiguration, of which we were reading this morning, we are told that Moses and Elias spake together on the mount "of the decease which Christ should accomplish at Jerusalem." The apostle chose it, as we see in this particular epistle, to be the grand subject for his work and labour of love; for he tells us, you will remember, in the second

chapter—"I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

This "preaching of the Cross," we must remember, implies great publicity. Preaching is not a work to be carried on in private; it implies hearers; it is a public work, which God in His love has planned for the salvation of "many souls." It requires also great plainness. For "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound," who will know what the meaning of the Gospel is? If at one moment we preach fully the freeness of the Gospel, and then for fear of any perverting the Scripture, so wrap it up in man's own words, that we blind the eyes of our people, how will it prove of any service to their souls? And then, there must be no keeping back of any of the truths of Scripture, either in order to please man, or for fear of any of the results which may follow. At least we see that this was the manner in which the apostle Paul himself acted; for in the fifteenth chapter of this same epistle, speaking of the commencement of his work in the ministry, when they were in their sins and not converted, he declares that he began with those same truths, which I am setting before you now. "I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received; how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."

II. Passing from the doctrine itself, I consider, secondly, the manner in which it is received. And the text tells us, that it is received in two different ways; it is either "foolishness," or it is "the power of God."

1. It is "foolishness" to some. Why is this?

Many reason upon the preaching of the Gospel, somewhat after this manner. 'We go to one place of worship, and we go to another, and we do not always hear the same truths; we will not therefore say that either of these preachers is wrong, but this we will say, that the Gospel cannot be necessary.' This is a false argument, which people use: 'the Gospel cannot be necessary, when there are so many in the world, who are ignorant of that Gospel as it is explained to me, or who neglect it altogether.' But, dear brethren, there are many persons who neglect their health, there are many persons who misuse that blessing which God has given them, and yet no one will pretend to say, that health is not necessary for us. In the same way, the perversion, the ignorance, or the neglect of the Gos-

pel cannot be a proof that it is not right for us to receive it. But so some make it "foolishness."

Again: there are others, who do not feel their want of the Gospel. They do not feel, that they themselves are sinners. They have never yet been convinced of sin. They speak of themselves as sinners but press them with the question, and they cannot bring themselves to say—"I deserve to go to hell." Therefore they will not seek the one way to heaven; not seeing that they are in the wrong road, they never find it necessary to inquire which is the right. They are, in short, like those very worldly-wise men, of whom we read in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, the seventeenth chapter: "then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him; and some said, What will this babler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods." And why was this? Because they themselves did not feel the need of a sufficient Saviour, when Paul "preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection."

Again: there are very few persons, who will meditate on God's Word at all. Few there are—perhaps some of you will enter into this—few who make a daily practice of reading a portion of God's Word. Some persons call themselves Christians, and do not care for the Word of Christ, and do not read that Word. They would feel it to be impossible to go without food for their bodies every day, but find it very easy to "fast forty days and forty nights" without food for their souls. Thus they search not the Scriptures, with the end of saving their souls; and therefore, the preaching of the Cross is to them "foolishness."

Again: it appears "foolishness" to many, simply because their own wisdom has nothing to do with salvation. Neither the wisdom of the preacher, nor the wisdom of the hearer. Certainly not the wisdom of the preacher; because, if you look again to the seventeenth verse of this chapter, the apostle says, "Christ sent Me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect;" and in the fourth verse of the next chapter he says—"My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom." Neither has it any thing to do with the wisdom of the hearers; for they could not plan the way of salvation. It requires no talent to receive the Gospel; it is a question of the

heart, not the head. And thus, when they hear the truth which brings their wisdom down, and shows that it is of no avail in the way of salvation, they act like Naaman, who, when he was told the simple remedy which the prophet enjoined, "turned and went away in a rage." Many of you, perhaps, have heard of a certain lady, who, when visited by a faithful minister on her dying bed, was told plainly, that if she would be saved, she must in fact be saved upon the very same terms as the dying thief; and at once did "the preaching of the Cross" appear "foolishness" to her, for she rose in her bed, recovering sufficient strength for the exertion, so distasteful was this preaching to her, and exclaimed, "Before I would be saved as the dying thief, I would"—but before she could finish the sentence, she was a corpse. A practical illustration of the preaching of the Cross being "foolishness."

2. But it is not so to all; for the text before us tells us, it is, "unto them which are saved, the power of God."

That is to say, first of all, it is the only way in which God chooses to save sinners. The substance of it, the doctrine itself, must be received, if we would be saved. Thus, for instance, the apostle tells us, in the second epistle to the Corinthians and tenth chapter—"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

But take scriptural characters, to show you this power. It was the revelation of Christ to Zaccheus, which made that overreaching publican declare that he "restored fourfold," and led him to "receive Jesus joyfully." It was the preaching of the Cross, that made the persecuting Paul to become one whose heart burned with love for the souls of sinners. It was the preaching of the Cross, and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, that made Peter forsake all that he had, to follow Jesus.

And why is it, that it should have this power? Because, letting the sinner know his wants, it shows him, that be they of what character they may, there is a supply for them in the Gospel of Jesus. Does he feel himself a sinner? The Cross proclaims, that "the blood of Christ cleanses him from all sin." Does he feel that he is much tempted by Satan?

The Cross is the doctrine which cheers him; for he remembers that part of the Cross was the temptation of his Redeemer, and therefore that "He is able to succour them that are tempted." Is he afflicted with the loss of those that are dear to him? The Cross points out, that there is sympathy in Jesus, who wept over His departed friend. Thus, whether his wants be spiritual, or whether they be of a more temporal character, he looks at this doctrine, and feels that "all the promises are yea and amen in Christ;" and they come home to his conscience and to his feelings, and cheer him in his hour of trial. He finds that this is indeed "the power of God;" affording him food for meditation, and, above all, motives to holiness.

In short, I may sum up in this way what I have now been saying concerning the power of the Gospel. It is that which awakens the sinner: for if I want to see "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," and my own exceeding sinfulness, I read it not upon my own heart, not by my own feelings, but upon the cross of Christ on Calvary, where I behold God's beloved Son not only dying for the world, but, as the apostle says, "giving Himself for me." The Gospel it is, that enlightens: it enlightens me as to God's dealings with a sinner, and as to the one way of salvation. We might urge upon sinners the necessity of considering their souls, and we do so again and again, but their ears are stopped, they are deaf, they will not hear, they cannot hear; it is when the Gospel is faithfully preached, that that unstops the ears of deaf sinners, and enables them to hear that Jesus Christ is "the way and the truth and the life." It is the Gospel, again, that softens the hearts of men. Oh! how many a sinner has been preached to merely by terror and alarm, and it has made no useful impression, but the law has only increased his rebelliousness, and made him determine to live, while he lives, a life of sin and ungodliness! It is when the Gospel is preached, that men's hearts are softened, and the weakest are encouraged; so that again and again we find, that those to whom we have been utter strangers previously, and persons the least likely (as far as man can judge,) to open their spiritual condition to a stranger, or to speak to him at all, come—as I would invite all of you to come to any one of your ministers—and make known the state of their souls, in order that they may be counselled and built up; having been originally moved, not by ter-

ror and alarm, but by the blessed truths we have been setting before you to-night. In short, whatever it is that we require, we find it furnished to us in the Gospel, which shows us the way in which a sinner is reconciled to God. The power of that Gospel is thus manifested in its complete success, however weak the instrument may be; and that minister must know but little of his work, who does not know that "the treasure is in an earthen vessel," that there is nothing in himself, that it is not that he recommends the Gospel, but that God works by him with His own Word, showing His own power, which He makes His minister the instrument of declaring.

III. We are to speak, lastly, of the ends of the hearers. It is "foolishness" to some, it is "the power of God" to others; it is foolishness "to them that perish"—it is power "unto us which are saved." The end, therefore, of every hearer, is either that he "perish," or that he is amongst the "saved."

By the term "them that perish," I understand those who are at this present time perishing—in a perishing condition. Thus we read in the third chapter of St. John's Gospel—"He that believeth on Christ, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God;" he has not believed the Gospel, and therefore he is now in a state of condemnation, or in a perishing condition.

OF it may refer to a man that is "perishing," as he is becoming more and more hardened. For you will remember, that there is a great similarity between the heart of man and the high road upon which we tread. Just as the constant traffic on the road will make it harder—make it (as we term it) bind more together, so is it with the sinner's heart; if the Word of God, or the Gospel itself, falls upon that heart again and again, and is not received into it, the surface becomes still more and more hardened against the truth, and that man is in a far worse condition than he was before.

Or, lastly, it may refer to the final condition of the sinner. Thus we read in the tenth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews—"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy" (or a common) "thing;

and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

Such is the condition of those, to whom the preaching of the cross is "foolishness;" let us now turn for a moment to those, to whom it is "the power of God."

It is the power of God "unto us which are saved;" that is, to those who are chosen in Christ through sanctification of the Spirit. In them salvation is begun. They have "received Christ Jesus;" and therefore they "have become the sons of God." They are "in Christ Jesus;" and, as St. Paul plainly tells us, "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." As we are told in another place, they have "passed from death unto life."

Or it may refer to those, who are growing in conformity to the likeness of Jesus. Or perhaps, lastly, to those who shall have the full enjoyment of salvation at the second coming of our Lord.

Thus I have explained to you the passage before us. Now it is quite clear, that all of you, my dear brethren, are either "saved," or are "perishing." The whole of us may be divided into these two classes—saved, or perishing. And the test by which we may know our own condition is—how we have received the preaching of the cross of Christ.

Dear brethren, how have *you* received that preaching? Are you "perishing?" What an awful thought, that there should be some one sitting in this Church, who is perishing—and who knows he is perishing! What an awful thing it must be for that man, if ever he reads his Bible at all, to think that when the Lord Jesus comes again "to be glorified in His saints," He will "take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Look, then, at my question to-night—how have you received the preaching of the Cross? Look at it, brethren, and examine whether it be "foolishness" to you. The time *must* come, when all that has gone by must be reviewed; and it cannot serve you at that day, to be able to enumerate your own good works, your own merits, your own character. These will serve you nothing then. How has "the preaching of the Cross" been received? To them that perish, it is "fool-

ishness;" is it foolishness to any one of you?

Perhaps there is some one here, who says—"I have thought it unnecessary to hear so often of Jesus; I do not like that which is called "preaching the Gospel;" I see no occasion for thinking so much upon this subject." Then, you are now "perishing."

But *will* you perish? "Why will you die?" Will you receive that "preaching of the Cross," which I have set before you to-night? Will you, in a word, take Christ, His sufferings, His resurrection, His intercession, as your only hope for salvation?

But the other class. Are you "saved?" Then give Christ the glory. If you have accepted the doctrine of the Cross, I am sure it will lead you to exclaim—"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" No longer, then, speak of yourself doing this or that. If you are "saved," it is the Gospel, which "is the power of God;" and now "Christ lives in you;" and "the life which you now live in the flesh, you live by faith in the Son of God."

But let me entreat every one, who thinks that he has received "the preaching of the Cross," and that he is in this saved condition, to live up to his privileges. I am not saying, that you will be without sin; but live using the means which God has given you as believers. If you are saved, you are one with Christ. You may go to Him, who is the head of the whole body, and seek for help. If you feel a deficiency in strength, a deficiency in spirituality, a deficiency in comfort, go to the Lord Jesus Christ himself; for in Him all fulness dwells. Draw from that fulness, and you shall receive whatever your case requires. If any one of you were to come to us your ministers, to speak to us concerning your souls, we should direct you at once in the same way. Nothing but an appeal to the fountain head will ever give you peace; but if you thus receive "the preaching of the Cross," and take Christ as your only hope, you will find yourselves in possession of confidence now—a growing confidence—you will have peace in life, you will have comfort in death, you will have happiness throughout all eternity.

THE HYPOCRITE DETECTED BY HIS PRAYERS.

A SERMON,
BY THE REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.

PREACHED AT CAMDEN CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
DECEMBER 22, 1844.

"Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?"—
Job xxvii. 10.

It is in respect of "the hypocrite," that the patriarch Job asks these emphatic questions: questions which, as you must be all aware, convey the strongest denials; for we need not observe to any one acquainted with the phraseology of Scripture, that the inspired writers use the form of a question, when they intend most distinctly to assert that such or such things cannot be. The questions before us are tantamount to unqualified affirmations, that the party spoken of will *not* "delight himself in the Almighty," and that he will *not* "always call upon God." Who the party is, you may learn from the preceding verses. In the eighth verse Job asks—"For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" In the following verse he enquires, of course with reference to the same party—"Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him?" And as the questions we have taken for our text, follow immediately upon this, it is evident that these also apply to the hypocrite.

But it is not necessary, that we understand by "the hypocrite" nothing but the character, which is now commonly so defined. The word would seem to have been used in a larger sense by Job. By "hypocrite" we commonly mean one who assumes the form or appearance of religion for the purpose of imposing upon others—of passing himself off for what he is not; but when Job speaks of a "hypocrite," he does not appear to confine the name to this spiritual impostor, but rather to extend it to every one whose religion is merely nominal—to every insincere and inconsistent professor. You will perceive this very clearly by looking at the seventh verse, which immediately precedes the series of questions already adduced: "Let mine enemy be as the wicked; and he that riseth up against me, as the unrighteous." As he has thus expressly mentioned "the wicked" and "the unrighteous," it is natural to suppose that "the hypocrite," on whom the discourse is afterwards employed, has been included under these more general

names; or that hypocrisy is to be understood in a wide sense, as the want of genuine religion, the religion of the heart.

Indeed, so long as we are speaking of members of a religious community, it is evident, that without departing far from the stricter meaning of the word, we may characterise as hypocrites, all, without any exception, who are not in practice what they are by profession. For example, there is not one of you, who is not by profession a believer in Christ; inasmuch as you are all members of the visible Church, you may be all said to declare yourselves disciples of the crucified Saviour. But if there be those amongst you, whose hearts are unrenewed, whose lives are un sanctified, such persons, it is most evident, are not what they pass themselves off for. Christian by profession, yet unchristian by practice—what is this but hypocrisy? Who is the hypocrite, if not he, who "having the form of godliness, denies the power thereof?" And whether or not it may be duly thought of, surely "the form of godliness" is with all, who having been baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Church, retain the outward badge of so high and holy a communion.

There will not, then, be any thing strained or exaggerated in the application of the text, if we regard it as having to do generally with unconverted persons; with that great mass, who, bearing the Christian name, have nevertheless not yielded themselves up to the service of their God. And then the questions before us affirm of these persons, that they may be religious by fits, that they may have their seasons of devotion, but that there will be nothing lasting in their spiritual exercises. You see where the emphasis must be laid in the second of the questions—"Will he *always* call upon God?" It is implied that he will sometimes—it is denied that he will always—call upon God. So that perseverance in prayer, the persisting in prayer under all variety of circumstances, is given as a test, by which to try the sincerity, the reality of religion. The truly religious man, the man whose religion is of the

heart, prays "always:" any other, who has but the outside of religion, will pray, but not always; not under all circumstances, but only under some; in a particular case, or a particular contingency.

No doubt we shall find, as we proceed, that the former of the two questions, as well as the latter, furnishes a test for discriminating between real religion and nominal. Indeed we may observe at once, that the two questions have a close dependence the one upon the other; it is the not "delighting in the Almighty," which causes His service to be felt wearisome, and where His service is felt wearisome, there will not be the continued calling upon His name. But all these points will be brought out more distinctly, as we proceed with our discourse. We have sufficiently cleared the way to a right understanding of the addition of our text. We have settled, that the questions of Job have to do, generally, with those who are religious in name, but want religion of the heart; that they affirm of such persons, that they may have fits of devotion, but not those steadfast habits, which will distinguish real godliness; and they thus make inconsistency in prayer an evidence of insincerity, a sign of hypocrisy. These more general views of the text having been settled and adjusted, we may now proceed to follow out in greater detail the trains of thought suggested by the questions—"Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he *always* call upon God?"

Now we can hardly suppose, that there is one of you, who is altogether a stranger to prayer; who at no period of his life, and under none of those varied circumstances, which must have entered into the lot of all but the very young, has addressed petitions to the invisible God. There is, we might almost say, an instinct in our nature, which prompts man to prayer, even if you keep out of sight the tendencies derived from a Christian education; for a cry for help to some invisible Being will escape the most ignorant in a moment of peril. Even he who professes to doubt the existence of God, will own it by the sudden ejaculation, when the fear of death has unexpectedly fallen upon him. We may safely, therefore, assume that all of you have known what it is, to feel the mind turned upon God, as a Being to be spoken with, and implored; and that you have all, at one time or another, yielded to an impulse which you could hardly have withstood, and

addressed the Almighty in the voice of petition. In some moment of terrible anxiety, in some hour of bitter grief, you have all felt—and you have all acted on the feeling—that deliverance or comfort could come only from above; and though it may have been with little knowledge as to how God could be approached, and with less assurance as to His readiness to answer, you have breathed out a petition for assistance or consolation.

But there are many of you, of whom we cannot doubt that they have gone much beyond this; they have not only uttered a cry under the pressure of some great affliction, but they have for a time made a practice of prayer; having their regular seasons for prayer, and observing those seasons with no small attentiveness. But after a while they have found the practice irksome; as circumstances altered, and the feelings deadened, which at first prompted them to prayer, they have gradually relaxed from the habit; easily admitting excuses for omitting the duty, till at length the duty has been dropped, without their giving themselves the trouble to justify the change. Of course such a case would fall amongst those described in the text; for it is the case of a person, who does not "always call upon God."

But we do not suppose, that in order to the coming under this description, it is needful that a person should have commenced a habit of prayer, and then have altogether dropped it. On the contrary, we believe that the habit may be persisted in, but that nevertheless the description may equally hold good. For, no doubt, there are many, who from the force of early instruction and custom, begin and end every day with some kind or another of prayer, but who cannot be called religious, as having the heart in religion, and the life pervaded by its motives and its rules. And how is it, that in such a case as this, the test of not "always calling upon God," can be used to discriminating hypocrisy from insincerity? Is not he to be considered as praying "always," who prays habitually morning and evening? and may not, then, in contradiction to the question before us, the praying "always" be the characteristic of nominal religion as well as of real?

We might here move the question, whether the mere formal prayers of those, whose religion is a name, should be called prayers at all; for, unless the heart go along with the lip, there is undoubtedly nothing of acceptable petition. But what

our text means by "calling upon God," is evidently what may be, and is, done by the hypocrite; and it would not therefore be a fair way of meeting the difficulty, presented by the case of habitual, but formal prayers, to deny them the character of being prayers at all. We would rather consider, that the word "always" in the text is not satisfied by a man's having stated times for prayer—by his offering up prayer every morning and night; but that it requires a prayerful mind—a mind at all times apt for prayer. *He* prays "always," who feels the duty and the privilege of communing with God at all times, and under all circumstances: not only when God is chastening him, but when He "is crowning him with loving-kindness;" not only in adversity, but in prosperity; who has wants to express, when to the eye of the world every want seems supplied; who has desires to breathe, as well when "his cup runneth over," as when "hungry and thirsty, his soul fainteth in him." *He* prays "always," not indeed who is always on his knees, or always engaged with specific acts of devotion, for this were impossible, and, if possible, inconsistent with the appointed duties of life; but he who carries a prayerful spirit into every occupation and every condition; who never feels as if it would be a violent transition, in any company or under any circumstances, to address himself to God: so truly has he "God in all his thoughts"—so pervaded is the whole train and current of his being with the consciousness, that "of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things."

But there must be true religion, the religion of the heart, religion ingrained in the inner man, before there can be this "calling always upon God." Where there is only outside and formal religion, the religion of a hypocrite or of a nominal professor, prayer will be merely a thing by fits and starts; or if performed at stated seasons, will never be thought of at any other. The heart not being in communion with God, there will be no speaking to the invisible Creator, except where there are all the externals of the act of devotion.

This, however, it is, of which the exposition of our text requires us to furnish a more distinct illustration. Having now, therefore, in a measure defined what it is to "call always upon God;" having shown you, that there may be the regular offering up of prayer, where there is no title to any such description; let us en-

quire more distinctly, how it comes to pass, that there must be religion of the heart, before of any man there can be other than a negative answer to the questions—"Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?"

Now let it first be observed, that all prayer supposes a sense of wants to be supplied, and a consciousness that the supply must come from God. If a man do not feel that he have wants, he will address himself to no one in prayer; if he feel that he have wants, but do not also feel that their supply must come from God, it will not be to God that he offers up prayer; but where the two conditions combine—the sense of want and the consciousness that the supply must be from God—there will be the offering up of prayer to the invisible Creator. And hence it comes to pass, that there may be what we have called a praying by fits and starts. Under particular circumstances, all men will feel wants—wants which they will also feel can be supplied only by God; and therefore the likelihood is, that whilst these circumstances last, they will be earnest and sincere in praying unto God. The man in danger of death—the storm raging in fury and the ship straining amid the breakers—will pray for deliverance; there being none but God, whom he can believe able to guard him from so fearful a peril. But will he continue to pray, when the ship has ridden out the storm? Evidently, not unless he have a consciousness of other wants, over and above that of the being saved from so imminent a danger. His prayer will be only an occasional prayer, recurring with the occurrence of some great crisis in his life. There cannot be a habit of prayer, except as there is a constant sense of wants, requiring a constant supply. Then again, the man who has a general impression of the being dependent upon God, so that it is God who is to give him health and food and raiment—he may have his regular times of prayer, beginning the day with formal petitions for direction and guidance, and ending it with the like call for guardianship through the night; but if you take him at any other time, there will be nothing of a prayerful attitude of mind, unless indeed there be a continual sense of exposure to danger, or that intimacy (so to speak) with God as a father and a friend, which gives a bias to the thoughts, or keeps them always ready for a heavenward flight. So that in order

to the "calling always upon God," it is needful, as you must perceive, that a man should have always a sense of there being something to be done for him by God, or something to be obtained by him from God; otherwise, he may indeed "call upon God," but it will be only by fits and starts, as special emergencies arise, or at fixed seasons, when there is a formal petitioning for the common blessings of life. But unless there be true religion—unless the man be indeed a converted man, having surrendered his heart to be dwelt in by the Holy Spirit of God, it is impossible that he should have that constant sense of want, which will produce what we have defined as the persisting in prayer. For a constant sense of want implies a constant fear of sin, a constant need of Divine grace in order to the keeping the Divine commands—commands which may be broken every moment by thought or word or deed, and which therefore prescribe that every moment there be a leaning upon God, who alone "teacheth our hands to war, and our fingers to fight;" and this can be found only with the truly religious man, the man whose single aim it is to walk by God's law, and to live to God's glory. Any other may be on his guard against some particular forms of temptation; no other will consider himself as always in danger of sinning. Any other may be aware, that he has to show Christian principles on certain great occasions; no other will feel, that these principles are for every occasion; that it is tantamount to the not acting on them at all, not to act on them at all times. Any other may be satisfied with what he has already obtained from God; no other—none but he who is "hungering and thirsting after righteousness"—will feel that supply does but increase want. It is he who has "tasted that the Lord is good," who will be eager for fresh draughts from the inexhaustible fountain.

In this way you may readily see how it comes to be a test of depth and sincerity in religion, that there should be perseverance in prayer. Judge yourselves, men and brethren, judge your religion by such a test as this. We do not accuse the mass of you of being altogether strangers to prayer; we are ready to suppose of numbers, that under the pressure of specific trials and difficulties, they pour forth intense and fervid supplication; we are ready to suppose of numbers more, that they are in daily habits of prayer, being

accustomed when they rise in the morning, and when they go to rest at night, to kneel down and commend themselves to the care of the Almighty. But their case may be that of a hypocrite, or that of a mere formalist in religion. A really godly man carries with him a prayerful mind into every scene and every occupation. He has always a feeling of want, because his wants are spiritual wants; he has always a feeling of danger, because his dangers are spiritual dangers; and spiritual wants are those which are never filled, and spiritual dangers are those which are never absent. Oh! a sinner, conscious of sin, and panting after holiness, has always an unsatisfied desire, to prompt a petition; a soldier, exposed to unseen adversaries, and eager to be faithful, has always a peril, to urge him to supplication. But it is not thus—it cannot be thus—with those of you, in whom the fear of God and the love of Christ are not abiding and constraining principles. You may have your seasons of alarm, and then you will pray; but you will not pray when the alarm is over. You may have your moments of compunction, and then you will pray; but the prayer will perhaps ease the compunction, and having eased it, die with what produced it. You may have your wants to make known unto God; but they are your wants as mortal creatures rather than as immortal, and their daily supply leaves you little else to pray for. Oh! be not content with prayer like this. Be not content till you have, what as fallen and ruined creatures in a state of peril you ought to have, an abiding sense of abiding want; so that at no moment are you at a loss what to ask for, and at none at a loss whom to ask it from. Till you have this—this which will lead you to pray in the crowd as well as in the solitude—this which will keep the heart ever sitting at God's gate, the spirit ever bent on intercourse with heaven—your religion is at best that of the hypocrite or the formalist. You do not live in an atmosphere of prayer,—the atmosphere which a genuine Christian weaves about him, and carries with him. You are still involved in the sad description so emphatically put by the questions—"Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?"

But we have not yet pointed out to you, with sufficient distinctness, that there is a close connection between the two questions in our text; that it is because he does not "delight himself in the

Almighty," that the hypocrite or the formalist will not "always call upon God."

How utterly ignorant are they of religion, or how grievously do they misrepresent it, who give it a gloomy character; as though God's service were not "perfect freedom," as though "wisdom's ways" were not "ways of pleasantness," nor "all her paths peace!" They leave out, whether inadvertently or intentionally, the important fact, that the love of God is the mainspring of obedience, and that what love prompts to, we have delight in doing. The true Christian is not one who has to feel perpetual constraint upon himself, ordering his actions by the will of another, which will is in constant position to his own. He is rather one who has indeed to bring his will into unison with the Divine, which naturally it is not; but then he is happy in proportion as the harmony is accomplished, and pained only as there is discord. And, however at the entrance upon a religious life, there may have to be done much of violence to desires and feelings, it is certain, that as righteousness is persisted in, the desires and feelings themselves take a holier and more spiritual character. So that gradually the Christian finds, that what is duty is also pleasure. He approaches a state, in which self-gratification, except in things lawful, would be more truly self-denial. As he gives himself up to be led by the Spirit, he finds an exquisite delight in contemplations of God. God becomes to him the chief good, the dwelling-place of the heart, the home of the affections; and he learns to rejoice, not only in the gift, but far more in the Giver.

There is here a very broad, and a very important difference between the real and the nominal Christian. It is the gift, with which the nominal Christian is satisfied; if he obtain that, he is content. He prays to God for certain things; and if God bestow those things, he can do without God, till some new necessity suggest a new prayer. It is not God himself, who is the object of desire; as it was with holy David, who thus expressed his longings:—"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" The nominal Christian is not conscious of capacities which God alone can fill; he therefore rests in God's gifts, and has no longings after God himself. But it is wholly different

with the man of real, experimental piety. He values God's gifts, whether the gifts of His providence or of His grace; but what he pants after, are God's communications of Himself. Insignificant as he seems, he is too vast, and he feels himself too vast, to be filled except by God. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." And here is the secret of his being always ready for prayer. He delights in God; he draws his happiness from God; God is his happiness; and therefore prayer is to him no burdensome task, to which he goes with reluctance, and from which he escapes with gladness. It is not a duty, to which he feels impelled, when some urgent need arises, and which he could dispense with when the urgency is past; prayer is with him but the breathing of the soul; and the pain is in interrupted breathing, and not in continued. He does not turn to God, merely when driven from other sources of happiness, or pressed by some special necessity; God is rather to him as the magnet, which is always by a secret attraction drawing towards itself; or as the sun, round which his orbit is traced. How, then, can he be other than always ready for communion with God? Nay, how can he be other than always in communion? The soul may not be always, in express and set terms, addressing itself to God; but truly there is such fellowship between God and the soul, that the soul may always be said to be going forth towards God; going forth in those solemn, yet joyful silences, which, like angels' footsteps, rapid but unheard, link heaven and earth in glorious intercourse.

Ah! my brethren, you have here something to aim at in religion; until you reach which, religion must be more or less of a dead and formal character. You must seek your happiness in God; not in God's gifts, but in God himself. "There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us." Why, in the book of Psalms, is God so often called a "refuge?" Because true religion is a ceaseless flying unto God, because the soul, like Noah's dove, finds no resting place upon the earth, and is therefore continually betaking herself to God. David could say, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." This was "delighting in God." And could prayer have been an occasional act?—must it not rather have been the constant flowing out of the soul, when God was so supreme, or, rather, alone in

the affections? Then think not to acquire the habit of prayer, to make yourselves what you ought to be, of prayerful spirits—spirits always bent for prayer, by merely prescribing to yourselves stated seasons of devotion. You may observe these seasons; but it will be as a task, so long as the heart does not make God its home. Whilst the heart has its home upon earth, it may make forced journeys—it cannot be continually aspiring towards God. But once learn to find your happiness in God; taught experimentally that nothing created can fill your capacities, give up the soul to be occupied by the Creator; and at all times, and under all circumstances, without being schooled as for an effort, simply through the tendencies, the homeward tendencies, of a confiding and affectionate spirit, you will turn to God, and speak to God, and hearken to His voice, and commit yourselves to His keeping; your experience verifying, that there is the very closest connection between the questions in our text; that, with the hypocrite or the formalist, it is because he does not “delight himself in the Almighty,” that he does not “call always upon his God.”

But we have yet, in the last place, to throw rapidly together certain reasons for that inconstancy in prayer, which is one great sign of a defective religion—reasons which have not been sufficiently put forth by our foregoing statements, and which may explain to some of our hearers the fluctuations and changes, of which they have been conscious in themselves.

We have supposed, that almost every man is, at one time or other, induced to pray. We do not merely mean, that he utters a cry for deliverance at some moment of distress; but rather, that with few exceptions, men have seasons of spiritual solicitude, during which they seek God, and address Him with petitions. This, we shall venture to believe, has been the case with many amongst you. You are not now, it may be, regular in prayer; but you have had your times of prayer—times when you performed that great duty with considerable care, though you have gradually relaxed, and when perhaps omitted it altogether. How came this to pass? How was it, that you did not arrive at the “always calling upon God?” Probably you left off praying, because you were not willing to leave off sinning. Habitual prayer and habitual sin are not likely to exist long together. Sin will make you uneasy in

prayer, or prayer will make you uneasy in sin. It was a good saying of some of the older divines, that praying will make a man leave off sinning, or sinning will make him leave off praying. May not this be the explanation of your not “calling always upon God?” There was some favourite passion, which you persisted in indulging, even whilst you persisted in praying. Perhaps—for this is possible, this is even common—you indulged the very passion, against which you were praying; the prayer serving as a sort of sop to the conscience; a make-believe, that whilst you did the wrong thing, you had the wish, though not the power, to do the right. No wonder, that before long you left off praying. Be more honest another time. If you are secretly determined on continuing in a sin, if you are not sincerely desirous of overcoming that sin, do not mock God by praying against that sin. And take it as a general rule, that prayer will be only by fits and starts, that there will never be such a habit of prayer, such a prayerfulness of spirit, as to justify the expression “calling always upon God,” unless you are at war with sin; unless you strive with all diligence to keep under those evil propensities, the indulging of which, as it grieves God’s Spirit, will necessarily hinder, and at last silence, supplication.

For here you are to observe another great reason why, where there is no depth in religion, there will be no perseverance in prayer. Fervent, effectual, importunate prayer is the utterance of God’s Spirit, making intercession within us. It is not our own voice, for “we know not what we should pray for as we ought;” we have to be taught how to pray, and our constant prayer should be for the spirit of prayer. But this is what the hypocrite and the formalist are either ignorant or unmindful of. They pray in their own strength; they have no consciousness of their inability for the very act, in which it is their duty to engage: not an inability which exonerates them from the duty, but an inability which should make them seek Divine help for its discharge. And praying not in dependence on the Holy Spirit, it is but swimming in the wide sea, where there is nothing to lay hold on: a few desperate struggles, and then a sinking down in death.

If, then, you would learn to “call always upon God,” keep much in mind that the Spirit must “help your infirmities.” When you kneel down for prayer, pray that you may pray. Do not proceed

at once to the remembering and expressing other wants; confine yourselves to the one great want of "the spirit of grace and supplication." That obtained, you will pray "the effectual fervent prayer," even though, as the apostle saith, it may be "with groanings that cannot be uttered;" that withheld, the prayer will bring down no blessing from above, however fluent it may have been in expression.

We are not, of course, unmindful, that if the Spirit of God alone can teach us to "pray as we ought," that Spirit alone can enable us to pray for itself. But you are to remember, that the impulse to prayer is not from man himself, but from the Holy Ghost; so that the man, who, moved to prayer, begins with praying for the Spirit, is not, in so doing, praying without the Spirit, for this were in contradiction to the doctrine before us. It is the Spirit, which prompts him to the act of prayer; and forasmuch as this Spirit has itself recorded his inability to pray, it is the Spirit which suggests also the subject of the prayer. There is, then, no disagreement between the statements, that our first prayer should be for the Spirit, and that there can be no effectual prayer without the Spirit. If the Spirit dictated the sentences in Scripture as to our need of its assistance in order to prayer, and if it be this Spirit, which in any case urges a man to prayer, then evidently he who, when he kneels down to pray, prays that he *may* pray, is praying *by* the Spirit, whilst praying *for* the Spirit.

Again and again, therefore, do we entreat you to remember your need of God's Spirit, if, according to St. Paul's words, you would "continue instant in prayer." If it have not been a secret determination to persist in sin, which has made you leave off praying, it has probably been the practical forgetfulness of the office of the Holy Ghost as an Intercessor within us. And if, apart from this special office, you recur once more to the connection between the questions of our text, how dependant are we still on God's Spirit for that perseverance, in which the hypocrite fails! For who but the Spirit can lead us to "delight ourselves in the Almighty?"—and this delighting ourselves it is, which will produce our "calling always upon God." The Spirit it is, which takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to the soul; the Spirit it is, which, as the Comforter of the Church, teaches wherein true happiness lies, puts in a measure into present possession, and gives assurance of future and more abundant; the Spirit it is, which

purges the vision, so that objects are seen in their just proportions, and rectifies the affections, so that they no longer misrepresent evil and good. The Spirit, therefore, it is, which will make us delight ourselves in God, drawing us from the creature, and centring us on the Creator.

Under, then, every point of view, if you will be constant in prayer, you must recognize with all reverence, and cherish with all diligence, the work of the Holy Ghost. We can give no better lesson to the beginner in religion, and none to him who has made greatest progress, than that he depend on the Spirit to "help his infirmities." Examine yourselves in this matter. Perhaps you will find more of leaning upon yourselves than you suspect. Pride has a wonderful power of worming itself in, and getting indulgence under some specious disguise. It is possible enough, so to renounce our own merits, as to make a merit of renouncing them. Be not, then, too sure, that you are obeying and walking by God's Spirit. The lame man may take the arm of a friend, and yet trust to his own crutch all the while; and the act of prayer, as we have already intimated, is one by which to test your simple, habitual reliance on the Spirit. When you pray, do you remember—do you act on the remembrance—that you have to be taught what to pray for, and how to pray for it? It will be thus, if the Spirit's office be duly and practically recognized. Otherwise you will pray either as those who "think to be heard for their much speaking," or as those whose own feelings are the best expositions of their wants; and in neither case is the prayer that of those, who "call always upon God." For those "call always," not so much by protracted speech, as by attached affection; and having their wills swallowed up in the Divine, leave their heavenly Father to choose for them. Oh! what and where should we be, if, even as to the subject matter of our prayers, we were left to choose for ourselves?

Hear, then, the sum of the matter. It is the sign of genuine vital religion, to "call always upon God." The hypocrite cannot do it, and the formalist cannot have it, because they give themselves not up to be taught by the Spirit. But such as cherish, with all watchfulness and all diligence, the motions of the Spirit—they shall reach that habit of communion with God, which, if it be constant prayer in the midst of infirmities, shall be constant praise when "mortality is swallowed up of life."

THE FEAR OF GOD IN THE HOUSE.

A SERMON, BY THE REV. H. G. WATKINS, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. SWITHIN'S CHURCH, CANNON STREET, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
JANUARY 26, 1845.

(His annual Sermon to Heads of Families.)

—“*Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*”—Proverbs xxiii. 17.

“THE fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” It is a fear to offend God as the fountain of all good, and as the bestower upon us of all the comforts which we enjoy. This fear will make us careful lest we materially fall short in the discharge of the duties, which we owe to our fellow-creatures; and more especially to those who may be placed by God's providence under our immediate influence, and therefore to whom our daily conduct may be very helpful or very harmful, very beneficial or very mischievous.

This fear of offending God is the source of all that is morally and religiously good among mankind. It is, indeed, a moving power, and it is also a sort of balance wheel, that maintains, and at the same time regulates, our daily course of action, our moral and religious conduct. Where the fear of the Lord rules in the heart, by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, our duties to our fellow-creatures will not be done by fits and starts; not merely on favourite or favourable occasions, but habitually, evenly and constantly. A really right-hearted Christian is one under a constant, pervading influence; and the grace of God within him ought to be always (and we hope it mostly is,) in operation in all his various transactions with his fellow-creatures; and certainly with those of his own household.

Many parsimonious people excuse themselves from subscribing to public Charities, by saying, “Charity begins at home.” And so it ought to do always; and so it will do, with those who truly fear God. Charity—love and good offices—much more valuable than money—should be felt and experienced by those among whom we dwell. St. Paul says—“If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” “I will walk,” said David—one who feared the Lord—“I will walk within my house with a perfect heart,” with sincerity and uprightness of conduct; “I hate the sins of unfaithfulness” to my household; “there shall no such cleave unto me.”

There may be, and there are—and blessed be God for it—some good qualities and much good temper, found in a dwelling house where there may be no

fear of the Lord; but we maintain it, that all uniform, consistent, continuous care in the management of a household, all that can be done to make servants, and children, and rulers in a house, as good and as happy as they may be, must arise out of the fear of the Lord in those who govern and in those who serve. And where this does not exist, and where of course, therefore, it does not operate—where this is not the ruling principle—though there may be several things, such as liberal wages, and kindness, and civility of behaviour, yet as a whole, the good is not attempted that ought to be attempted; the religious superintendence, and the care for the morals and everlasting happiness of children and servants, is not taken.

All Christian principle and practice is summed up in the phrase of our text—“the fear of the Lord.” For it produces general and universal obedience of the heart to God; and those who enjoy its influence it makes to “be just, ruling in the fear of God;” and to “be merciful, as our Father who is in heaven, is merciful.” “Take provision for your father and his family,” said Joseph to his brethren, when he sent them back from Egypt to Canaan; “for,” he adds, “I fear God.” “I fed with bread and water,” said Obadiah, “an hundred prophets, whom I preserved from the persecution of Ahab;” and it is said—“Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly.” “Blessed is the man,” then, “that feareth the Lord; he hath great delight in His commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the faithful shall be blessed.”

Those heads, and governors who are influenced by religious motives—and who among us ought not to be so, whether we be serving in families, or rulers in them, or children in them? who that hopes to enjoy God's favour, and to attain everlasting life, can be destitute of the fear of the Lord?—those who regard the injunction in the text, will consider that the Lord by His providence has appointed one in one station, and another in another; and that we all are as brothers and sisters, in the view of our common heavenly Father. None of us brought any thing into this world, and none of us will carry any thing out. There is no difference between the master, or mistress,

and the servant, when they are laid in their respective coffins. That we all have a Ruler in heaven, with whom "there is no respect of persons," is a truth which ought to be continually in our contemplation. He has "no respect of persons" but between the righteous and the wicked; between those who serve Him, and those who serve Him not. We are therefore required to "bear one another's burdens," to sympathize one with another, and to befriend one another, according to our means and opportunities, and the various circumstances and stations in which Providence has placed us;—to do unto others as we would they should do unto us.

In proportion as this benevolent law of Christ is found to be regarded in any city, in any parish, in any family or workshop, in that same proportion is real, genuine, abiding comfort and happiness found also. Christian benevolence and fellow feeling is true and solid pleasure. We mean not a morbid sensibility, which paralyses the hands and freezes the heart as to home beneficence, because home beneficence is not blazoned forth to the public;—we do not mean a weeping over the artificial details of mere fiction, while the mind is turned away from all real distress; but we mean a habitual disposition and endeavour to do our Christian duty towards all people, and especially among those who are most within the sphere of our personal influence.

Every family, however small, and every warehouse or workshop, is a little commonwealth, in which there should be mutual good feeling, and sympathies with each other, for the good of all. In vain would even an apostle say "Peace be to this house," if the God of peace is not feared and loved, and honoured and worshipped in it, and peaceable and dutiful and forbearing tempers are not habitually found among its inmates. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." This is an injunction of the Holy Ghost, the God of peace. It is laid upon rulers over families, as well as upon servants, and upon people in general; and every person will have to give an account of himself or herself at the last, as to how he or she occupied the station assigned to him or to her. Why are we not to follow the things that manifest good will and kindness towards servants? They are surely not excluded from God's care. Let us begin at home, in every good work, and acquire a character in the breasts of those who serve us, and act towards them as those that we are to meet by and by at the tribunal of God!

"Be in the fear of the Lord all the day long." Begin every day with God, in secret prayer. We "know not what the

day may bring forth;" what disasters may occur, or what circumstances may occasion disturbance and affliction of mind. Let us pray, that the Giver of all good would put His fear, and keep His fear, in our hearts; that He would teach us hourly to do the things that please Him; and give us the spirit and mind of Joshua, when he said—"As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord."

And if we would begin well in our family, and have the command of our own time and the ordering of our own pursuits, we should certainly occupy a short space in reading a portion of Holy Scripture, and offering a short prayer, with the assembled household. Excuses are easily made to ourselves, but will they be accepted of God? *That*, after all, is the important question. We have indeed to do with a merciful Father, not a hard taskmaster; One that will accept us according to the opportunities we have, and will not judge us according to those not put into our power: we have One to do with—and blessed be His name for it—who will make all just allowances, and accept the hearty will where the actual good deed could not be performed. But on the other hand, God "will not be mocked." He knows the measure of our ability and opportunity. He will, He has said, "pour out His fury upon the families that call not upon His name." But Jesus the Saviour has promised, that "where two or three meet together in His name," (and they need not be in the temple, but they may be in a private chamber or in a parlour,) He will meet with them, and He will bless them. It is only because faith in Christ, and the fear of the Lord, and hope of immortality, are so little found, that family worship is so very infrequent. It is a want of real godliness, that produces this want of family worship; and because it is so infrequent, the consequence is, that much more trouble is sustained on all sides, than otherwise would be. Of course, some contrivances are required, according to the circumstances of the family; but where there is a disposition, an opportunity will soon be found.

If one ruler of the house opposes the good desires and good intentions of the other party, the opposing party will have a solemn account to give at the last day; and may have much vexation from servants, as a punishment in this life also. If servants are irreligious, and you are conscious of it, the obligation is more strong upon you, to communicate Christian instruction while you have them under your influence—while they stay with you; and Christian instruction, in this way of family worship, is likely to pro-

mote the stay of servants, that are good and valuable. Every patriarch was a priest in his own house; and God applauded Abraham, whom He called "His friend," in this way—"I know him," that is, I approve of him, "that he will command his children and his household, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him." You should be "a minister for good" to them; and institute literally a Home Mission, in order to promote their salvation, and your own peace and comfort.

If a servant decidedly oppose any good and religious custom, let him or her depart: you are clear from the blame. Exercise your authority in such a religious affair, as you know you can, and you know you always do in your secular concerns. A merchant knows how to discharge a servant, who will not obey his orders in the counting-house; and a mistress would know how to discharge her servants, if they were not found diligent when diligence was absolutely required in the family; why, then, should authority be paralysed, only when the fear and service of God is in question? We have heard of some servants, who have been averse to the exercise of family prayer at first, and averse also to the going out on the Sabbath day *only* to attend public worship; we have known such servants, who have at length become real Christians through the grace of God upon them, though at first they were inclined to dislike their situations.

I am fully persuaded, that no time is more profitably spent, than perhaps one quarter of an hour in reading and prayer. It tends to promote family order, mutual goodwill, and mutual good service. It puts God before us; and using the means of grace, the grace of God will be with us, and make those means profitable. And I am bold to say, take any fifty families in which there is family prayer, and a corresponding good conduct, and (all other things being alike,) compare them with another fifty houses, of which it may be truly said, "the fear of God is *not* in this place," and you will find that there is no comparison between the peace and long services in the several dwellings.

There are many helps for heads of families, whereby they may commence and carry on this benevolent and godly and

religious instruction of themselves and of their servants.*

Servants are, in general, very deficient in religious knowledge, except they have been trained under Christian teachers in very good Schools. Many of our servants come of very ignorant and irreligious parents. In some, the good instructions they have received in Charity and Sunday Schools, are almost obliterated by the irreligious examples of those they have since served. They have enjoyed neither family nor Church religion; and no contrivances are ever made in many families for their attending public worship. Some often have in fact to mind the house, only that the family may profane the Sabbath day by actual pleasure-taking. Our blessed Lord has said, that the fruit will be according to the tree; and can we expect good, Christian, honest, sober, industrious fruits, to arise from a mind that is untutored, and that has examples of irreligion and ungodliness always before it? Christians are very gloriously engaged in sending Bibles to distant countries; but their own kitchens ought to be supplied with a copy, and a few practical religious books. It is sad, that the souls of servants should be without religious knowledge. We send missionaries to the heathen, and we do well—and the Lord add to the number of faithful missionaries, and spread them over the whole world—and we are endeavouring to promote the education of the young in our parishes, and to diminish the deplorable ignorance that prevails among the juvenile population; but we grievously want a large measure of *Christian example*, of good, Sunday, holy example, in persons of education and authority and influence—we want more family, home religion—to make us, as a people, what we ought to be; to diminish the inmates of our criminal goals, and the enormous expence and wretchedness attendant on the transportation of offenders. Depravity of heart and irreligious conduct are grievously found in high places, and with those whose station renders them particularly influential for harm to those below them. Good, Christian, godly *example* is a language that meets people's eyes and ears, who may have in other respects but a small measure of understanding. It is a universal language, that the most ignorant of our dependants can

* Dr. Doddridge's Family Expositor, and also a very cheap Commentary on the Scriptures, sold by the Religious Tract Society, in St Paul's Church Yard, small portions of which may be read morning and evening. Kirkett on the New Testament, is also a very useful family book; and there are many books of excellent family prayers. The "Pocket Prayer Book," which costs not above half a crown, contains prayers for every day in the week for a whole month, and a variety of meditations on portions of Scripture, and hymns annexed on each of the subjects.

read and learn, and through God's grace get to heaven by.

It has been the good moral example, combined with the religious training, and the holy keeping of the Sabbath generally, that has given to Scotland the security and the comfort, for which it has obtained so high a character. In the country districts, at least, of the North, family prayer is now common among them; and the parish minister is requested to visit the families, avowedly, to instruct the children and the servants in the ways of God. And thus many of them prosper far beyond others of their Southern neighbours. When Christian prayer, and Christian tempers and a Christian example are happily combined, there is found good will and harmony, contentment and peace; and where these are wanting, there is very often strife and confusion and every evil work.

To sum up all in few words; and this, most probably, will be the last time that I shall address my parishioners upon the

subjects which have taken up our time for the last three weeks. What I have said I have spoken in love, with real affection, with a desire for the benefit of every class of the parishioners, and I hope it has been received in love and affection. The best proof of it will be, the bringing into practical use the advices, the scriptural, godly, profitable advices, that have been given, and given also for the last forty years. To sum up all, then; and to conclude this Course of Lectures*. Let family affairs be conducted with order and regularity: Let rebukes be given with mildness. Let forbearance be shown for minor faults; and forgiveness granted even for some larger ones, if there are signs of penitence, and a reasonable hope of reformation. And let approbation also be given, as to all good and deserving conduct. Then will the blessing of God rest upon you; and those, who have been under your influence, protection and care, in another day will "rise up and call you blessed."

THE DUTIES OF A GOSPEL MINISTER.

A SERMON, BY THE REV. THOMAS JONES, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. SAVIOUR'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK, ON TUESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 16, 1755.

At the Visitation of the Rev. Dr. Thackeray, Archdeacon of Surrey.

'I am pure from the blood of all men.'—Acts xx. 26.

HAPPY Paul, who could make this assertion! Happy are those of his successors, who can make his words their own! May the eternal God increase their number!

These words are part of St. Paul's address to the elders of the Church at Ephesus, when he was about to depart from them. His affairs would not permit him to go to Ephesus, but, when he was at Miletus, he summoned the elders of the Church to appear before him; and, when they were come to him, "he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you, at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears

and temptations which befel me by the lying in wait of the Jews; and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go, bound in the Spirit, unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the

* The annual series of Discourses—
To Young Persons:
To Parents:
To Servants:
To Heads of Families.

Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more; wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men." The doctrines St. Paul laboured so earnestly to inculcate, were, repentance, or conversion to God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; this was the commission he had received; and, because, by the grace of God assisting him, he had executed it faithfully, recommending it by his own example, and sparing no pains to bring souls on their way to his blessed Master, he therefore declared that he was "pure from the blood of all men."

This commission every minister of the Gospel is honoured with; and it is incumbent on us to imitate the apostle's practice, that we too may be able to say, when we are called to give an account of our stewardship, we are "pure from the blood of all men." We cannot but be sensible it will be our greatest happiness to be able to make this declaration; and, before we can justly declare this, we must have performed, as far as in us lies, what is required of us as ministers of Christ, and what we have solemnly promised and sworn to do.

I shall, therefore, make it my business in the following discourse, to set forth the great duties of a Gospel minister, and then to make a suitable application to ourselves.

And may the holy and eternal Spirit of God vouchsafe us His gracious presence at this time; may He take all our hearts into His own possession; may He remove all opposition and prejudices from our minds, and enable us to attend with meekness on what shall now be delivered, either out of His Word, or agreeable thereto.

I. First, then, I am to set before you the great duties of a Gospel minister.

And here, my reverend and honoured brethren, let me intreat your serious and candid attention. If I speak plainly, impute it to a desire of discharging the office assigned me, and not to any inclination to offend.

It is impossible to give you a full view of ministerial duty in the small compass of a discourse; I can only instance in a few particulars.

And first, it is our duty "to preach, not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." The apostle in the text declares, that he is "pure from the blood of all men," because he had preached "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." These are the doctrines we are to preach. We are to tell

the people committed to our charge, that they are fallen creatures, that their nature is depraved and corrupt, and that they must come to the Lord Jesus Christ for repentance and faith, to have that evil nature removed. The whole scope and tenor of the Scripture runs thus: that man is a fallen creature, that his nature is averse to God, and that he has no power to turn himself "from darkness unto light," by any will of his own. The Scriptures represent mankind in a state of nature, as dark and blind; they declare, that nothing can enlighten an unconverted soul, but the reviving rays of Christ, the Sun of righteousness. They give us no account of the dignity of our nature, they do not amuse us with a detail of our moral excellencies, but tell us in plain terms, that we are "born in sin," that "there is none righteous, no, not one," that "we are all, by nature, "gone out of the way," that "we are altogether become abominable;" they tell us also, that nothing can raise us from this dismal state, but the operations of the Spirit of God; that of ourselves we cannot so much as "think a good thought." These things, therefore, we are to teach and exhort; for, till we make our hearers sensible of their sinfulness and danger, we cannot expect they will apply to the remedy. We are to inform the people committed to our charge, that there is an absolute necessity for their seeing their own vileness, before they can be made partakers of the grace of the Gospel.

After having convinced sinners of the error of their ways, and, by the blessing of God on our ministry, induced them to seek for mercy, we are then to point out to them the Lord Jesus Christ, the dear Redeemer of the world, who died for their sins; with whom there is mercy, and with whom there is plenteous redemption. We are to advise them to beg the assistance of the Holy Spirit of God, to apply the merits of this blessed Redeemer to their hearts. It is our duty to warn sinners of the danger they are in, and to invite them home to the blessed Jesus, through whose merits we are to propose to them a free salvation, without their own merits or deserving.

Amusing our hearers with schemes of our own, with systems of natural religion, which never had any existence but in idea, is not preaching Jesus Christ. Wrapping them up in the conceit of their own abilities is diametrically opposite to the Gospel, and the greatest injury we can possibly do them.

Again; as the people are not to be harangued on the dignity of their nature, so neither ought they to be told that their own works can plead their cause with

God, or that they have the least hand in their justification. It is our duty (if we would be faithful to our trust) to inform them, that they must come to Christ as sinners, owning their insufficiency, and ascribe to Him the whole glory of their salvation.

We are told in Scripture, that "the heart of man is only evil continually;" that "God hath concluded all under sin;" and, with regard to our recovery by Jesus Christ, we are told, "there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby they can be saved," but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." These texts, with many others which might be produced, sufficiently prove, that mankind by nature are in a state of separation from God, and that their salvation is entirely owing to the Lord Jesus Christ, without their works or performances.

As I have the authority of the Bible, I have also the authority of our own Church; which, I trust, I shall always honour and revere, next to the Word of God.

In her ninth article, entitled, "Of original or birth sin," she declares, "That man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

This is our Church's system of natural religion.

In her tenth article, "of Free-will," she tells us her opinion of moral agency, so much contended for of late.

"The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasing and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will."

And that justification by faith alone is the doctrine of the Church of England, she convinces us in her eleventh article, "Of the justification of man :—"

"We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is

expressed in the homily of justification."

I must refer those who are desirous of farther evidence, to the excellent homilies of our Church, where they will find these great truths frequently and strongly inculcated; more especially in the first "Homily on fasting," in the "Two sermons on salvation by Christ," and in the first homily on "Good works annexed to faith;" these evidences ought to be admitted by us as strong proofs, because we have all subscribed, and solemnly engaged to abide by them.

We see, then, that preaching justification by works, is no part of a minister's duty. I mean not to decry a life of piety and holiness; God forbid. I mean, as I am taught by our own Church, that we are justified by the free grace of God in Christ Jesus. Faith is the instrument by which this justification is applied to the soul, and works are the fruit and sign of the genuineness of our faith. It is plain, works can have no hand in our justification; because we are expressly told, that of ourselves we can do no good works. We cannot be justified by works, because we can do no good works till we are justified. They are the fruit of the Spirit of God working in the hearts of all His people, inclining them "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Thus we are told in the twelfth article, that good works are "the fruits of faith, and do follow after" (not go before.)—they "follow after justification;" and even then, they "cannot endure the severity of God's judgment;" yet, being the consequence of justifying faith, "they are pleasing and acceptable to God." But then, I would observe, that by faith I do not mean a bare belief, (the devils have this,) but a principle wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit of God, enabling the sinner to see his sins pardoned, and leading him into all holiness of heart and life.

In support of this, I appeal to the homily "On Easter-day," and to the "Sermons on the sacraments."

Works, then, are the consequence of a justifying faith; and, for a minister to preach up works to a congregation who have experienced nothing of the love of Jesus on their souls, is full as absurd as to begin to build at the top, without laying the foundation.

But a late apologist for the clergy hath told us, (what, I am sure, I should never have dreamed of,) that we are to take it for granted, that all our hearers are *sincere believers* in Jesus Christ. Now, for my part, I cannot take this for granted. I heartily wish that one in fifty was a sincere believer. Believe they may as the devils do, but this is not faith, I can look upon no man to be a sincere believer in

Jesus, but one whose heart is changed, who has felt the weight of sin, and has experienced, or, at least, is desirous of experiencing the pardon of God to his soul; but I cannot look on those to be sincere believers, who, though they make an outward profession, have never felt the power of the Gospel in their hearts, nor show the fruits of it in their lives and conversations; for, as our twelfth article expresses, "By these works a lively faith is as clearly discerned, as a tree is known by its fruits."

These, my brethren, are the doctrines we are bound to preach; this, namely, free salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ, is the doctrine poor sinners want, and what they would gladly flock to hear. These doctrines it is our duty to preach with all diligence; we are to propose them to our people, "whether they will hear or whether they will forbear." We are not to fear the face of man; we must expect opposition from the men of this world, if we preach the Gospel in sincerity. Our Master himself gave offence, His apostles gave offence, and all His ministers, who have dared to preach free salvation by His name, have always given offence. But, notwithstanding the opposition we are sure to meet with from carnal men, we must resolve to go on, and "preach the Word with all boldness." If we fear the face of man, we can never perform what is required of us. We must fear "no man's person," but declare unto all "the whole counsel of God, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear."

But, in order to speak the word with power, we must experience, or, at least, desire to experience, these things in our own hearts. When the word goes from the heart, it will always reach the heart. Oh! how powerfully will the Gospel of Jesus prevail over all opposition, when it comes from the heart of the preacher!

Again, if we desire "the word spoken by us" should take effect, we must be "instant in season," and out of season." We must omit no opportunity of inviting sinners to God; we must make it our "meat and drink, to do the will of Him that sent us." The minister of Christ is always in his element, when he is inviting sinners to return to his blessed Master. Converting souls, and not "lording it over God's heritage," is the duty of a Christian preacher; and, indeed, if our own hearts are "sprinkled with the blood of Jesus," we shall desire nothing so earnestly as to "feed the flock of God with the sincere milk of the Word." We shall not want to bask in the dignities and preferments of the Church, but shall be willing to "spend and be spent," in our

blessed Master's service; we shall not think we have discharged our duty by having performed some few outward services, but shall ever be employed in our Master's business. And if we are not thus employed, we are none of His servants. We may bear His name, it is true, but unless we are diligent to "publish the glad tidings of salvation" by Jesus Christ, "we are bastards, and not sons;" we may profess to serve God, but we are all the while serving our own belly.

Once more. It is our indispensable duty to recommend our doctrine by our lives and conversations. Whatever may have been our practice before we were converted, being once persuaded of the truths of the Gospel, we are bound to embrace them, and become patterns to our flock "in all holiness of conversation."

Thus have I pointed out some few of the duties required of a Gospel minister; and "who is sufficient for these things?" No one in his own strength; none but such as are assisted by the good Spirit of God. Our office, my brethren, requires great things of us; and we have great reason to beg God's directions, that we may be able to discharge it aright. This brings me, as I proposed, to apply what has been said to ourselves.

II. And now, my brethren, are we "pure from the blood of all men?" Let us lay our hands on our hearts, and ask ourselves the question—and may the eternal God, in whose presence we are, enable us to answer aright!—Do we preach free salvation by Jesus Christ, or do we "preach for doctrine the commandments of men?" We have all solemnly engaged to preach free salvation by Jesus Christ, *without man's merits or deservings*. I would lay a greater stress upon this, because this doctrine is grown into great disrepute of late; and some men are not only contented to neglect these great truths, but have the assurance to brand them with enthusiasm. How they can reconcile this with their oaths and subscriptions, they are to determine; reconcile it to the Word of God they cannot.

It is a general complaint, that our Churches are less frequented than they used formerly to be, and that a degeneracy of manners universally prevails. Now I may venture to affirm, that the moral preaching, so much in vogue, is the cause of all this. In short, we have preached morality so long, that we have hardly any morality left; and this moral preaching has made our people so very immoral, that there are no lengths of wickedness which they are afraid of running into. And how should it be otherwise? We have forsaken the Christian

doctrines,—“the fountain of living waters; and have hewed to ourselves broken cisterns, which will hold no water.”

Justification by Christ alone, as I have already observed, is the doctrine of the Gospel and of our own Church; and never, till within a century ago, had those who call themselves ministers the face to contradict it.

Preaching works arose from hence: in the grand rebellion, when religion was made a stalking horse to serve the blackest and most diabolical purposes, many persons concerned in it perverted the Christian doctrine of justification by faith, and asserted, that believing only in the name of Jesus, would entitle them to eternal joys. This was downright Antinomianism. Some faithful ministers thought it their duty to stem this torrent of iniquity, and to declare in all their discourses, that that could be no true faith in Christ which was unattended with its proper fruits. This method of preaching justification by works; and so, in order to avoid Antinomianism, we are at last run into rank Arminianism; and I am sorry to say, the Arminian doctrine of justification by works has too long prevailed among us; and it is high time it should be exploded. I am sure it is counterfeit divinity, and will never pass current in the court of heaven. It has indeed been a long time established among us; and the learned Dr. Edwards, in the second volume of his *Preacher*, complains of it. His words are these: “That there is a great declension from the primitive truths is too manifest to be concealed; yea, and the persons concerned do not desire it should be concealed; for they proclaim it to the world, and therefore they cannot complain that I have done them any wrong. The writings and discourses of our divines bear witness daily, that the Arminian points are their delight; and these they are continually cultivating and bringing to perfection. Remonstrantism is espoused by our chiefs; it appears in a canonical habit; it is voted to be orthodox; and it even passes for the articles of our Church. Nothing will go down with the bulk of our clergy but this. All other doctrines are esteemed by them as a religious and better sort of canting and gibberish; and yet, by the way, it is observable, what good company these gentlemen keep,—Pelagians, Papists and Socinians; these, all along, in their several tenets, are their associates, their comrades, and their friends, whom yet at other times they pretend to dislike, and hold no correspondence with, yea, they seem to show a

great antipathy against them; but, it seems, they can unite very peaceably in their doctrines, which I wish may not be a presage and forerunner of their joining in more. God grant, that the persons who are most concerned in this discourse may seriously consider what I have said, before it be too late.” Thus far this great and good divine.

If we believe the Scriptures, if we pay the least regard to our own Church, if we attend to the words already quoted, we must be sensible, that preaching justification by works is indeed an unchristian and a most *damnable doctrine*; in short, it is downright Popery. Justification by works is not the Protestant, but Popish doctrine.

If we neglect to preach the doctrine of salvation by Christ alone, without mincing the matter, we are guilty of perjury. Those who make a conscience of their oaths and subscriptions, will not be offended at this plainness of speech; those, who do not, ought to be told of it; and, I pray, God convert them.

I observed before, that this doctrine has been branded with the name of enthusiasm. I shall convince you of the absurdity of this notion, in the words of the divine above-mentioned.

“Consider how unreasonable it is, to cry out against new lights, to profess our dislike of innovations, to condemn the giddy sectaries for turning about with every wind of doctrine, and yet to be really guilty of this ourselves. Arminianism is a new scheme of religion, which defaces the ancient portraiture we had of the Divine nature and attributes; it is a new fashion, and mode of Divinity; and yet we boast that our faith is immoveable, that we stand fast and keep our ground, and are fixed on our centre, whilst others fly off from it, and describe a very vagrant circumference. Our Churchmen generally talk of antiquity, and what fine things there were of old in the primitive times; and they are displeased with those, that show any dislike to them: but how self-condemned are they, whilst they revolt from some of the ancient doctrines of the apostles and primitive Christians, from the persuasion of all the prelates and divines of our Church that were our predecessors since the Reformation, and from the determination of the first reformed Churches abroad! Where, then, is our stability? where, then, is our immoveableness? where is our abhorrence of innovations?”

• I hope I have now given sufficient proofs for what I have advanced; viz., that it is our indispensable duty to preach the plain doctrines of the Gospel, “without the enticing words of man’s wisdom.”

Let us, therefore, ask ourselves, do we make a conscience of these things? Do we, in short, make a conscience of our profession? Do we make it our study, in everything to "approve ourselves unto God," and to save the souls committed to us? God forgive us all; for here, I am sure, we are greatly deficient. Oh! let us implore the Spirit of God, "lest by any means, after we have preached to others, we ourselves should become cast-aways."

Again: are we half so eager to hunt for souls, as we are to hunt after preferment? And here what a mean and scandalous thing it is, for those who are honoured with a commission from God, and who are to stand between Him and His people, to be dangling at the heels of a man in power for a little paltry promotion! And for this reason, the word of the Lord by the prophet is come upon us. "Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people." And are we not become base and contemptible before the people, by departing from the "commandment given unto us," and by running after the error of Balaam for reward? Is not that other prophecy fulfilled upon us—"The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money?"

But, to conclude; let us, my brethren, for God's sake, and for the poor souls' sake committed to our charge, resolve, by His grace, to preach "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;" let us remember, what a solemn account we must one day make. If we do not preach the Gospel in sincerity, how can we appear at God's tremendous bar? What can we say to those poor souls, who shall be deluded by our false and pernicious doctrines, if they perish through our neglect? They will justly say unto us, in the presence of men and angels, 'We lay our damnation at your door, ye pharisaical teachers, who have withholden from us the good Word of life; you never told us of the danger we were in; you amused us with a detail of our fancied perfections, and never showed us the way to a crucified Redeemer.' They, indeed, "shall die in their iniquities; but their blood will God require at our hands."

This, surely, if we believe anything,—unless we only make a trade of our profession,—this, surely, is enough to make the stoutest of us tremble.

Thus have I gone through with what I proposed. Whether I have said enough to move you, I know not; sure I am, I have said enough to terrify myself, and to stand abashed and confounded before

the face of God. Prudence, indeed, might have dictated to me not to have spoken so plainly, for fear of giving offence; but, if I should be afraid of speaking the truth, good God! what greater cause have those to fear, who falsify their oaths, betray their Master, and lead millions of souls into everlasting destruction! Lord Jesus, remove the veil from their hearts, and convince them of their danger, before it be too late!

One word to the congregation, and I have done.

You have heard, my brethren, with what freedom I have addressed those of my own profession; bear, then, with the same plainness to yourselves. Remember to esteem and honour those who labour among you "in the Word of God and doctrine." You see what great things are required of us. It is your duty to "pray" for us, that we "faint not." "We have a treasure" committed to us, it is true; but we have it "in earthen vessels." Remember this, and pity our infirmities, considering that we also are "men, subject to like passions with yourselves." Many of you are glad of an opportunity to revile the ministers of the Gospel, pay no regard to their admonitions, but despise their counsel; but you will do well to remember, that whoever "despiseth us, despiseth Him that sent us."

I shall now desire all here present to join their hearts with mine in solemn prayer to God for His blessing on the ministers of the Gospel; which we may do in the words of our own Church in her Ordination Service.

"Almighty God and most merciful Father, who, of Thine infinite goodness, hast given Thine only and dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer, and the author of everlasting life; who, after that He had made perfect our redemption by His death, and was ascended into heaven, poured down His gifts abundantly upon men, making some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and doctors, to the edifying and making perfect His Church; grant, we beseech Thee, to us Thy faithful servants, grace, that we may be evermore ready to spread abroad Thy Gospel, the glad tidings of reconciliation with Thee, and use the authority given us, not to destruction but to salvation, not to hurt but to help, so that, as wise and faithful servants, giving to Thy family their portion in due season, we may at last be received into everlasting joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen."

SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. GEORGE ALBERT ROGERS, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ISLINGTON, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
JANUARY 19, 1816.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Corinthians vi. 17, 18.

THE first word of our text, "Wherefore," necessarily connects it with the verses which go before. Its true force will appear, by carefully attending to the two
at "enlargement of soul." The Corinthians had received the Gospel from his own lips; they were a flourishing Church of professors; but many of them rested satisfied in the mere formal reception of the Gospel, without securing a saving interest in its promises. Others who had indeed become true believers, "new creatures" in Christ, were tarrying in the outer court of the Gospel sanctuary, and living far below the blessed privileges of their calling and election.

The anxious solicitude of the apostle for the well-being of this Church is strikingly exhibited. After having unfolded to them the scheme of salvation in the sublime words of the preceding chapter, he opens, that before us, with the energetic exhortation, "We, then, as workers together with Christ, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace (that is, the Gospel) of God in vain." Here he pressed the doctrine of true conversion of heart. And then in the eleventh verse, he seems to be so overwhelmed with a sense of believers' responsibilities, and so full of longing desire for their advancement in the Christian life, that he stands before them as a man with his mouth open, but unable to give vent to the intense feelings which burn within him. His lips are not sealed, but the words which drop from them are as nothing when compared with the enlarged, and inexpressible desires of his full heart. "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. Now for a recom-

pence in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged."

Now, there appears to us to be much that is analogous between the state of the Corinthians and that of ourselves. Far be it from us, for one moment to arrogate to ourselves the words of the inspired apostle, and say to you, "Ye are not straitened in us." Alas! we fear you have often been straitened in us. We must fall low before the footstool of mercy, and cry, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord."

But notwithstanding our own individual short-comings, we cannot be unmindful of the unnumbered and peculiar privileges which you have enjoyed. For many years this parish has been as the land of Goshen. Whilst gross darkness, darkness which might be felt, has settled upon other Churches, you have had light. But when we look around our own congregation, and inquire for the truly converted and spiritually-minded flock of Christ among you, alas! our heart sinks within us,—their number is so small. With much profession, there is but little grace. You all receive the Gospel, as far as outward attendance upon the means of grace goes; but with respect to your individual and saving interest in its promises, we are oppressed with the thought, that the greater number "receive it in vain."

The children of God too among us, seem to be living far below their privileges. Our tone of spirituality is low. Our life-blood flows, but it wants freedom, and warmth. We seem to be chilled under some uncongenial atmosphere, and stunted under some blighting influence. "The communion of saints" has become a doctrine in our creed, rather than a realized privilege in our daily experience. We meet with no persecution, and we think the times are improved, but the

truth is, we do not live sufficiently godly. We are not opposed, because there is so little in us worth opposing. We have become straitened, and we need enlargement.

We trust, brethren, there are those among us, ready to lift up their hearts to the throne of grace, and cry, "Lord, what wilt Thou have us to do, to remedy this evil?" We feel we must not stand where we are, lest our candlestick should be removed from its place. We should each one for himself, endeavour to discover the nature of his impediment. Let the unconverted portion of our congregation inquire, What is that accursed thing that keeps back our hearts from the Lord? And let believers inquire, What is the true cause of our leanness of soul?

We cannot hope to meet all cases on the present occasion. But we think our subject will embrace the greater number. If our opinion be correctly formed, that there is much that is analogous between the state of the Corinthians, and that of ourselves, we shall discover the cause of, and the remedy for, the evil in the exhortation before us. We shall see that the cause was amalgamation, a mixing with the world; the remedy, a separation, a coming out from the world. How could they expect the Gospel would not be "received in vain," how could they reasonably hope not to be "straitened in themselves," if they made no prayerful and persevering effort, to break fellowship with the world, and place themselves distinctly and unreservedly under the outstretched wing of the God of grace? Would the Most High, who inhabiteth eternity, accept and dwell in a divided heart? Would He share its throne with Satan? Or again, could the consolations of the Holy Spirit abide, or His graces flourish, under the withering blight of spiritual idolatry, treachery, and worldly mindedness? If the whole heart were not surrendered entirely for the habitation of the Lord, what reason had the one to expect any thing but destructive impenitency, or the other any thing better than narrowness and leanness of soul? The promises of salvation and soul prosperity have always been accompanied with the command expressed or understood in every instance—"My son, give Me thine heart." Half measures and double dealing with God are hateful to Him. We can expect no blessing, till we are both de-

cidedly in earnest and decidedly honest. To this honesty of heart, the apostle fixed the attention of the Corinthians; to it we would affectionately call yours, in the powerful words before us. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" (that is, ye who are regenerated,) "as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them: and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

You see, brethren, the whole blessing hangs upon separation. If there be no separation, there is no reception—no adoption.

Let us proceed to consider these three things: *from, in, and for* what we are to be separate.

J. We are to be separate from the men of the world. We are not to form alliances with them, but to be distinct from them. We are to make a clear line of distinction between those who fear and love the Lord, and those who fear and love Him not, and take our side with the former, through evil report and good report. Israel was a nation which "dwelt alone" and was "not reckoned among the nations." They were forbidden to intermarry with other nations. Dwelling in the midst of them, they were to keep themselves distinct and separate from them. Thus the children of God are to come out from among the people of the world, keep themselves distinct from them, and not be unequally yoked together with them. They cannot mix themselves up with them, as a matter of pleasure and of choice, and not of absolute necessity in their worldly callings, without suffering loss. If the providence of God has yoked them together, the case is altered. His grace will then be equal to their day. Joseph was upheld in the house of Potiphar, and in the court of Pharaoh. Daniel was preserved amid all the sin of a

Persian court. But their positions were God's appointment, and not their own choice. Jehoshaphat, on the contrary, voluntarily leagued himself with the ungodly king of Israel, and if the Lord had not helped him, he would have been slain in battle. And severe indeed was the rebuke which he received upon returning to his house: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from the Lord." It is dishonouring to the Lord, and therefore injurious to the soul, if we love and seek the company of the unconverted. Yea, if we make the men of the world our friends, we may talk about our faith in, and love to Christ, but it is very clear that we love His enemies better than Himself, and that our concord is rather with Belial, than with Him. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

We are to be separate also from the *things* of the world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," said the Holy Ghost by St. John; "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." You see, the whole command aims at the heart. "*Love not.*" We are in world, and must engage in the occupations of the world; and if we live not upon daily charity, we must have supporting possessions in the world. The things of the world *in themselves* are not sinful. It is the *lust* of them, which eats into the soul like a canker. Money is necessary for carrying on the transactions of life between man and man. Its possession is not sinful. But, alas! to how many does it prove a snare! "*The love of money is the root of all evil.*" It drowns many a man in perdition. The *love of dress*, and the *love of money*, proved the ruin of Achan.

Again, we must be separate from the *sinful practices*, and *habits*, and *fashions* of the world. The plain command from the pen of St. Paul is, "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." Many excuses are ready to be made, for complying with the sinful customs and manners of the age we live in. But if a man be in earnest about his soul, and honest before God, he will rather avoid that

which is even lawful, than enter upon that which is doubtful. He will not seek how near he can walk to the edge of the precipice without falling over. He will "*avoid every appearance of evil.*" If you are renewed in the spirit of your mind, you will be constrained, by a sanctified and elevated taste, to live above the vanities of the world.

But there are those who apologize for their mingling in the sinful pleasures of the world, such as the theatre, the race-course, and the ball-room, by saying they find no harm in them. Be it so. Let us allow, (which we cannot admit,) that you are an exception to the rule, and can be yoked to the world, without being worldly. We would ask, what does your *taste* for such things prove? Does not your *relish* for such things tell you plainly, that when you mingle in them, you are moving in your own natural element? And, if it be so, does it not prove further, that your heart has never been changed, and that the love of the Father, and the Spirit of Christ are not in you? Be not deceived, brethren; it is very easy to say we are Christians, but if any man be a Christian indeed, he is a changed creature, he is "transformed by the renewing of his mind;" he feels the evil of sin, his eyes are open to see the vanity and wickedness of "the course of this world," he believes what God has said shall be the awful doom of it, he believes that Christ has died to deliver him from it, and having "tasted the goodness of the Lord" and believing the blessed portion which is prepared for him, the world's pleasures and vanities are *disagreeable* to him, he nauseates them, and turns from them to his God.

Wherefore, brethren, if you would be truly and savingly converted, and not receive the Gospel of God in vain; if you would not be straitened in yourselves, seek to be transformed by the renewing of your mind; and, "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the *unclean thing*, and I will receive you."

II. Now let us notice, in the second place, in *what* we are to be separate.

1. We are to be separate in *our intercourse with the world*. The Gospel does not call us to shut ourselves up in a monastery, or seclude ourselves from the haunts of men. They who think to es-

escape from the world by any such seclusion, know neither the nature of the world which they are to give up, nor their own deceitful hearts. The seat of the world is the heart; and unless the heart be changed, and the affections renewed, no high walls or massive doors will be able to keep the world out of it. "I pray not," says our blessed Lord to His Father, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil." This shows the purpose concerning us. The Lord could, if He pleased, gather up the souls of His people to Himself, as soon as He has renewed them. But not they are His witnesses in the world. They are His living epistles. They are bearers of His image, which His Spirit has stamped upon their hearts. They are lights in the world; they are the salt of the earth. Whosoever His providence has placed them, there they are to move as "come out and separate" from the rest of mankind.

If they are surrounded with unconverted relatives, they are not to shut themselves up in their closets, because they can find no congenial spirit among them, but they are to "come out from among them, and be separate" as *distinct characters*. They are to be seen in the family circle, as "the sons and daughters" of God; as those which "touch not the unclean thing." This will produce division: Their conduct will be misunderstood. With every attempt to be as harmless as doves, offences and persecutions for the Gospel's sake will come. Christ has told us, that "a man's father shall be they of his own household." And "think not," says He, "that I am come to send peace on the earth; I come not to send peace, but a sword."

In every department of life, the true Christian must "come out and be separate" in *his character*, from the men of the world. He must not be ashamed of his profession. He must show his colours. It is true he will be stigmatized as an enthusiast by some, and as a fool by others. But the all-encouraging words of his Lord, are enough to carry him through all the reproach the world can heap upon him. "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice

ye in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."

2. Again: we must be *separate in our motives*.

The child of God will not only pursue *different* things from men of the world, but he will pursue the *same* things in a totally different spirit. His *motives* of action are different. When he rises up in the morning, it is to God. When he engages in the business of the day, it is for God. He walks with God, and lives for God. His talents and time and fortune are dedicated to God. Alas! how many young persons, instead of living to and for the Lord, fritter away time and talents upon mere vanity! They who have leisure, spend the whole day in trifles. Music, drawing, light reading, shopping, visiting, sight-seeing, (all things innocent enough in themselves,) make up their *occupation* in life. They live to *please themselves*, and not to fit themselves for the service of God. What a pitiable existence! How can such persons have any reasonable hope of being the children of God?

Again: the giddy man of business will be separate from the men of the world in his motives of action in *business*. He "touches no unclean thing." He despises and loathes the gain of fraud and falsehood, and artifice, and over-reaching. He repudiates the corrupt maxims and selfishness of the world. Integrity and exactness of dealing is, with him, not a point of worldly honour, but a matter of conscience before his God. He is known in the market, as well as in his own house, as a Christian. He never parts company with his Divine Master. He has God continually in his thoughts; and neither his life, nor his gains, are regarded as his own. And thus, though he is in the world, and mixing *with* the world, he is "known and read of all men" by his words, motives, and actions, not to be of the world. He is "come out from among them, and is separate."

III. Lastly, let us briefly notice, *for what* we are to be separate.

This is the point to which we have been wishing to bring you. The people of Christ (strange paradox to the world,) are no losers by their loss of the world, and its friendship. Look at the promise,

"I will receive you." Here is *reception* by the Most High. This includes pardon of all their sins, acceptance in God's sight, and nearness unto Him. As long as they are mixed up with the world, they cannot enjoy the tokens of His favour. But no sooner do they surrender their hearts to Him, and break their alliance with unbelievers, come forth from the fellowship of unrighteousness, have no communion with darkness, no concord with Belial, no part with an infidel, and no agreement with idols; no sooner are they "separate," than the Lord fulfils His gracious promise, to the joy of their hearts—"I will receive you." Yes, He *receives* them, and is gracious unto them. They forego the company of sinners, and have the contempt and hatred of the world, and the Lord knows it; and when the ungodly world frowns on them, the God of love smiles; and oh! *that* is enough to counterbalance all their self-denial, for His name's sake. If the Lord receive them, it matters little who may reject them. If He speak peace, none can give trouble. If He grant the refreshments of His grace, the pleasures of this world are insipid and contemptible. If He be their friend to stick closer than a brother, it matters little who is their enemy. If He *receive* them, they are blessed, they are happy, let who will "cast them out."

Take another glance at the text. The promise is fuller still. "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Here is *adoption* into the family of God! Poor, worthless sinners are not only received into favour, but adopted into the family of God, made His sons and daughters! Here is a mighty deep, an infinite abyss of love and grace! Here is fullness of joy, and blessedness for ever. Stop, stop, ye angels, in your flight through heaven's wide expanse, pause on Calvary's hill, contemplate redeeming love. Behold again and again this marvel of grace; scan its depths, and sing its glory. But no! angels' eye cannot penetrate it; the wide reach of their pure minds cannot grasp its infinitude. It passeth all cre-

ated understanding. The apostle John, whose eye was brightened with heavenly visions, stands amazed in the contemplation of it. "Behold," he exclaims, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

The blessing is *present*. It is the *immediate* portion and privilege of those, who come out from the world and are separate, to be *at once* received, to be *at once* admitted into the family of God. They are not left one moment as orphans in the world. The Lord stretches forth His arms of love, and receives them at once as His sons and daughters. He sends His Spirit into their hearts, "crying, Abba, Father." He enables them to look up to God as their own gracious God, and loving Father in Christ Jesus. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God."

Wherefore, my unconverted, halting, hesitating brethren, "come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." You have heard what you must give up; time would fail us to unfold all the unsearchable riches which you would receive, if you are separate. Halt no longer between two opinions. Pray for *strengthening* as well as *converting* grace, and at once break from the ranks of the world. It is mocking God, to expect adoption into His family, as long as you remain in the world. "Come out and be separate," and *then* He will "receive you."

And do *you*, Christian brethren, who feel that you are "straitened in yourselves," and need enlargement of soul, "separate yourselves" also, *more distinctly* from the world. The soul cannot thrive in the atmosphere of worldly-mindedness. Separation from the men, and from the things of the world, is absolutely necessary for enjoyment of God. Shun all *indistinctiveness* of character. Live as the "sons and daughters of God" in your families, and before the world. Let there be *no ambiguity* about you. *Profess* what you are, and *be* what you profess. "Be separate," and the Lord will receive you. He will enlarge your hearts, and then fill them with Himself.

THE ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. CHARLES BRADLEY, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. JAMES'S CHURCH, CLAPHAM, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
FEBRUARY 2, 1845.

"The Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me."—1 Corinthians xi. 23, 24.

This is St. Paul's account of the Lord's Supper—an account which he says he had received of the Lord himself; that is, not from the testimony of any of his fellow apostles, but by an immediate Divine revelation. It agrees exactly with that given us by the evangelists; especially with St. Luke's account, which is the most explanatory and complete.

I do not often bring this subject before you, brethren: partly because it is in itself so simple, as to require little explanation; and partly because, with this holy rite immediately before us, the mind sickens at the thought of the miserable controversies and corruptions, with which men have connected it. It is difficult to preach on it, without noticing these corruptions, and half forgetting the love of a bleeding Saviour in the follies of our fellow-men. I will view the subject to-day, as little in a controversial light as I can; but the little I do say of this kind, must be plainly said.

We will look, first, at the character or nature of this rite; then, at the authority of it; and then, at some of the probable purposes, for which it was enjoined.

I. Its character, or nature, is settled at once by this Scripture. It is a "remembrance," or memorial, of Christ: of His crucifixion for us, His violent and bloody death. It is this; and if we look only at what our Lord himself made it, it is nothing more than this. "This do," He said, "in remembrance of Me;" and He said no more. So that if we represent this rite as more than a memorial of Christ, one of these two things must follow: either we are misrepresenting it, or we are simply carrying out the idea of a memorial in a legitimate manner, as our Lord intended it in this case to be carried out.

Whence comes it, then, (you will ask.)

that such a diversity of opinion has so long existed in the Church, with respect to this simple ordinance?

One reason, I believe, brethren, is its very simplicity. Men, complicated in all their own ways, cannot understand God's simple ways; they are ever trying to complicate them. The Gospel itself, though depths of wisdom and knowledge are contained in it, is simplicity itself; again and again in Scripture, a hundred times over, do a few words give us the substance of it. But listen to men's comments and explanations: this simple thing is rendered complexity itself; and the humble enquirer, if God himself in pity does not come and teach him, despairs of comprehending it. So with this ordinance. Go to Scripture for its nature—you have it in a moment: go to men's books and explanations—you are again confounded; a mist comes over it.

But superstition and craft have had much to do with obscuring this rite, and perverting it: craft taking advantage of superstition, of men's weakness, to work out its own selfish purposes. Transubstantiation—the sacrament a sacrifice for sin—the receiving of it an obliteration of sin—a mysterious power inherent in it to do something in some magical way in men's minds—the dispensing of it the exclusive privilege of a certain order of men within a certain Church—can any intelligent, simple minded, unprejudiced person calmly weigh these notions, and connect them one with another, and yet doubt where they come from?

To carry our minds, brethren, to the scene we had before us on the last Sabbath. There was another simple thing. 'You must not eat of the fruit of that tree,' said God to man; 'I require you to abstain from it, as a mark of your subjection to Me; if you do eat of it, I shall consider that you have thrown off that

subjection; you die.' Man did at first regard this tree in that simple light; then it was well with him. But by and by he began to connect new ideas with that tree; to conceive of it as possessed of some mighty virtue; to look for great advantages to himself in eating of it. His ideas concerning it, apparently heightened and enlarged, became bewildered and confused. And we know the consequence: poor, miserable man ate, and died. And what brought about all this? Scripture tells us: man had been played upon; Satan had "beguiled him by his subtlety." So in this thing. Men have disputed about the sacrament, mixed up with it the strangest notions, hated one another, fought one with another, destroyed one another (I might say) in times past by thousands, on account of it. And why? There has been an unseen power at work, secretly giving birth to all this mischief; craft and subtlety having been playing upon men in all this, for the accomplishment of their own ends. And no matter whether the craft has come from earth or hell; it has been through it, that this beautiful monument, which our dying Lord erected in His Church to His redeeming love, has been so strangely misunderstood and debased. He intended His followers to meet around it in adoration of Him, and in mutual amity and love; to love Him, and to love one another, the better as they gathered around it. It has been through Satan, brethren, and the selfish ministers of Satan, that they have forgotten Him around it, and contended one with another around it, not always with angry words only, but sometimes with the sword, with the axe and stake.

Keep this idea, then, brethren, I would say, clearly in your minds: the Lord's Supper is a memorial of the Lord's death—His violent, painful death for us. I do not say, mark, it is nothing more than this; but He made it no more; and anything more that we make it, must arise naturally out of this, borrowed from it, and not be something new and foreign, superadded to it.

And another remark might be made: we must not throw a veil of mystery over this ordinance. It is an explanatory thing; a "showing forth" (the apostle says in the twenty-sixth verse,) "of the Lord's death." We must not make it a mystical thing. Here indeed, we may

say, where mystery begins, truth ends.

You will remind me, perhaps, that our Church, in her Sacramental Service, calls it a "mystery;" the bread and wine we partake in it, "holy mysteries." I answer, that our Church uses this word there in a peculiar sense—a sense obsolete now in our common discourse, but perfectly familiar to those of us, acquainted with our more ancient English literature and customs. It signifies there *emblems—representations*; not anything obscure or incomprehensible, but merely something that pictures or shadows forth, standing for something else. Thus the old dramatic representations of Scripture events were always called, in the days when they were exhibited, *mysteries—sacred and holy mysteries*.

II. Let us now look, secondly, at the authority of this rite.

It has a Divine authority; an authority distinctly Divine. "The Lord Jesus" himself, we read, "took bread;" He himself said, "Do this in remembrance of Me." Now we cannot say this, with reference to some of the institutions of the Church. The change of the Sabbath, for instance, from the last day of the Jewish week to the first; the baptism of infants; the erection of sacred buildings for the preaching of the Gospel, and God's public worship—we have no Divine authority that we are aware of, for these things, in the Christian Church. The Church practises them, and rightly practises them, from the example of the early Christians; believing them at the same time to be agreeable to the will of God. But, brethren, if we turn to the Lord's Supper, it stands on far higher ground. We do not refer to the Church, and early customs, and the presumed will of God, here; here is His declared will. Here is the great Head of the Church Himself instituting and commanding; the Lord Jesus originating this sacrament, perpetuating it, and giving it to us, not as a benefit or a boon (though it is such), but as an ordinance, commanding us to observe it. It stands in His Church, a monument to His love erected not by that Church itself in its gratitude, but by Himself; with its base resting, not on His Church's authority, or His Church's love, or His Church's adoration of Him, but on His own Divine authority, His right to command us, as the God who

created us, and the God-Man who is now enthroned in the heavens as the Lord Jehovah over us.

We are not left, then, to discuss the merits of this ordinance. We are not to judge of it by the apparent importance or non-importance of it. In appearance merely it is a trifle—as trifling as the forbidden tree in Paradise was; but that is nothing to us. There was a Divine command connected with that tree, which it was death to violate. There is a Divine command connected with this Divine rite; I will not say it is death to violate that, for Scripture no where says so; but I can tell you, brethren, what such a violation involves. There is a low estimate by us of the allegiance we owe to the great Lord of all; either a thoughtless or a contemptuous trifling with His authority; a setting-up of our opinions, or convenience or feelings, in opposition to His command. “Do this,” He says, “in remembrance of Me.” “It does not suit me to do it,” we answer; “I have a good reason why I should not.”

I pity the man, brethren, who feels that he loves his Saviour, and yet fears to approach His table. But I would say to such a man—how is it that you do not fear to live in open, manifest, continued disobedience to that loved Saviour's command? How is it, that this great fear, which ought to exist in your mind, does not drive out of your mind the less, which does exist there?

And the recollection that this is a Divine ordinance, takes off all meanness from it. It invests it, in the believer's sight, with a majesty and sacredness. He sees Christ stamped, as it were, on the emblems presented to his view in it. They are the appointed emblems of His Master's body and blood—appointed by that Master himself; and though He would soon think of bowing down to the stock of a tree, or worshipping a shadow, as of worshipping them, yet he regards them with reverence. Their common character is nothing to him; he forgets it in the higher character, which his Lord has put upon them. He is not an idolater, when he is kneeling down at the Lord's table; but he is this, brethren—a reverent worshipper there; a worshipper there, not of what he sees before him, but of that blessed, unseen Saviour, to which they carry his thoughts.

And think of the time, when the blessed

Saviour enjoined this rite. It was “the same night in which He was betrayed,” the text says: a little while only before His death. This heightens our view of its importance. A wise man does not employ his mind on trifles, when he sees his end approaching. If he give commands to his children or friends around him, they are important commands, or such as he deems important. He often reserves to the last the command he most wishes to be obeyed. So our Lord reserved this command to the last; and His doing so, not only gives it a peculiar impressiveness, appealing to our feelings, but a peculiar weight, commending it to our judgment. Had this ordinance been a mere useless ceremony, He would never, we may be sure, at any time have enjoined it; had it not been an ordinance of great importance in His eyes, He would not, we may be sure, have enjoined it now. “The same night in which He was betrayed,” when the hand of death was almost upon Him, He commanded us to observe it. It was high, therefore, in His esteem; it must have been high in His esteem, to be thought of in such an hour as this. It ought to be high in ours.

III. Let us come, thirdly, to the purposes for which it was enjoined.

1. It is a memorial of our Lord's death. It was enjoined on us, therefore, first and chiefly, to keep us mindful of His death; in other words, to be a memorial to us of it. Christ himself needs no such memorial of it; long as eternity shall last, He will never forget—never for one moment forget—the “agony and bloody sweat” of Gethsemane, and the “cross and passion” of Calvary. Nor will His holy angels in heaven ever forget His death; they cannot look on Him, but they see the traces of it in Him—mementoes of it. He himself in heaven is a standing memorial of it, ever appearing there before His angels as the Lamb that has been slain. But we, brethren, we on the earth, who cannot “see Him as He is,” need some memorial of His death, to keep us in remembrance of it. And this for two reasons.

First, because His death is of the utmost possible importance to us. It is worthy of being constantly remembered by us. We have spoken of the importance of this sacrament; it is important only as a shadow of an all-important substance. The death of Christ is the one thing, that

is important to a guilty sinner. Nothing even in Christ himself is so important to a guilty sinner as this. That is one reason, therefore, why the Lord is anxious to keep us mindful of it. It is like keeping a shipwrecked mariner mindful of the plank that is saving him.

The other reason is, we are very prone to become unmindful of it. We need a constantly recurring memorial of it, to keep it in our thoughts. The young Christian may say—'No; I could as soon forget my own existence, as forget the dying love of my blessed Saviour. It is my only hope, my only confidence: the first thing in the morning that enters my thoughts—the last at night. I should be a wretched sinner, could I forget this.' But we who are older, know that we can forget, or half forget, even this; and with a settled conviction still in our minds, that it is all-important to us. We are so constituted, that things as they become familiar, lose in some degree their effect on us. The cross of Christ, deeply as it impresses us when we first see its glory, we too often after a time begin to think of it, without seeing its glory; and unaffected by it, we gradually become less and less thoughtful of it. The Christian, battling with his internal corruptions, or bearing up, it may be, with difficulty, under his daily recurring duties and trials, has his attention half absorbed in his duties and trials and battles; in looking up for strength to sustain him under them, or for guidance to carry him safely and honourably through them. The consequence is, he frequently stops, and wonders to see for how long a time together he has unconsciously lost sight of, not indeed his upholding, comforting, but his bleeding, atoning Lord. We ministers, brethren, especially feel this. Still, as we think, and our congregations think, preaching the Gospel, we can go on for weeks together, without scarcely mentioning to our fellow sinners that precious blood, which only can cleanse them their sins.

Here, then, becomes obvious one design of the Lord's Supper; and with it, one part of the Divine wisdom and goodness in ordaining it. We are naturally forgetful; it suffers us not to forget, and recalls to our minds at stated seasons that which of all things it concerns us the most to remember.

2. Another design of this sacrament is, to keep us in a right frame of mind: in

other words, to quicken and keep alive in us those dispositions and feelings, which become us as redeemed sinners. It is not our salvation only, which flows to us from the Redeemer's cross; that cross, when rightly looked on, has an effect on our minds and hearts. All right principles and feelings within us either spring directly from it, or are strengthened and deepened by it.

In what does true religion consist, as it exists in a sinner's heart? A moment's consideration shows us, in much that is peculiar to a sinner's heart. A holy mourning for sin; a deep self-aborrence, shame and humiliation, on account of it; a turning of the soul to Christ, a resting of the soul on Christ, the Saviour from it; a lively hope and joy in Him, intense gratitude and love to Him, as a Saviour; an earnest desire to do something in the brief span of life, to show our love to Him, to the glory of His name—these things form the substance, not of a holy angel's, but of a redeemed sinner's religion. And the sacrament that brings the Lord's death before us, brings that before us, which is the spring of these things, the root of this religion; and not its root only, but its food, its very life and support.

Show me a man, brethren, who lives day by day within sight of his Redeemer's cross, with his eyes (as it were) ever fixed on that cross, making the precious blood that was shed there, his daily, his almost hourly meditation; it is not necessary you should tell me what kind of a man that is. I know that he is a warm hearted, bold, world-renouncing, self-denying, devoted, and in most cases rejoicing, happy follower of his Lord. It is to make us such men as he, that this holy supper is instituted. To work on our minds, dear brethren; not in any mysterious, magical way, but by presenting Christ's death to our minds, exciting in us those thoughts and feelings, which are connected with Christ's death, and which ought ever to exist and abound in His people's hearts.

There is food for the soul in this Supper, a strengthening and refreshing of the soul by it, because there is food for the soul's strength and refreshment in the thing which this Supper typifies and shows forth. The shadow is a shadow still, the picture is a picture still, but it leads our minds to the reality and the substance; and in leading them there,

through God's grace it affects, humbles, purifies, comforts us.

'Oh! the folly of men,' the scoffer says, 'to expect a little bread and wine to benefit their souls.' We answer, we do not expect bread and wine to benefit our souls; but we know, for we have felt, that the remembrance of Him who bled for us, can benefit our souls; and this bread and wine which you despise, brings Him to our thoughts,—and so at times to our thoughts as nothing else can. He who enjoined us this rite, blesses this rite to us, for the purposes for which He enjoined it. We see Him in it; see Him broken and bleeding for us; see Him "bearing in His own body on the tree" the fearful burden of our sins; see our enormous sins, as it were, passing away from us, as we contemplate it; and while we see it thus, there are thoughts and feelings within our souls, which are life and joy to us. He is "known to us," often, "in breaking of bread;" known to us as our Saviour, our Jesus, the Lord we have sought, and that we have found.

3. I mention only one design more of this Sacrament, though there are many: it is, to make us the setters forth, the exhibitors, as it were, of Christ's death. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup," says the apostle in the twenty-sixth verse, "ye do show"—not 'commemorate,' observe, though that idea is in the apostle's mind—"ye do show the Lord's death till He come." "Show it." The original word is the same as that, which is more than once translated *preach*. It means, to declare publicly; to publish.

We are made active parties, then, you observe, in this ordinance; not merely reminded ourselves by it of the Lord's death, but reminding others of His death by our attendance on it. Our fellow-men: declaring to them what we think of Christ's death; our high estimate of it; our confidence in it; commending it to them. And showing it to God himself; presenting, as it were, our dying Lord to Him. It is a pleading His death before Him; reminding Him of it; appealing to Him, and to all those gracious promises and purposes of His, connected with it. It answers to Christ's employment in heaven. He is interceding for us there before the throne with His blood; we, in this ordinance, are interceding for ourselves through His blood.

Some will tell us, it is a sacrifice offered

to Him; a commemorative sacrifice as they call it. We abjure the notion, and the phraseology with it. It is no sacrifice, except a "sacrifice of praise." But this it is: a memorial of a perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice, long ago offered; and a pleading by us guilty sinners now, of that sacrifice, before God, believing it to be perfect and all-sufficient, and declaring that we are ready to rest our eternal fall on it.

Attend this ordinance, brethren, in this spirit, this supplicating, pleading spirit. Make it a eucharist, a giving of thanks; but make it too a going in before God, a telling Him of the blood that has been shed—shed for you—a beseeching Him for that blood's sake, for His word and His oath's sake, to blot out all your iniquities, and cleanse you from your sins; to regard you, kneeling at His table, as sprinkled with that precious blood, which He has said "cleanseth from all sin;" and to look on you, in His faithfulness, as he looks on those, whose iniquities are for ever forgiven, and whose sins covered.

It seems strange, brethren, I would say in conclusion, that to such a rite as we have now been considering, it should be necessary to urge and entreat any one to come. I have seldom done this, as you know; for my own impression is, let a man once really understand what the death of Christ is to his soul—it will not be long before his own feelings will bring him to this memorial of it. Sometimes, however, I have feared, that the manner in which a faithful minister of the Gospel is often obliged in these days to speak of all rites and ceremonies, may have a tendency to depreciate this rite in some minds. I pray God, that nothing you may hear in this place, may produce this effect in any of you. Guard against it. I *must* speak the truth, on this, and every point, as far as I know it; let what will come, either to me or to you, in consequence of speaking of it. But do you take care, that the truth, through my unguarded, or perhaps awkward exhibition of it, does not leave an untrue, erroneous impression on your minds.

How often this rite is to be celebrated or observed in the Church, Scripture does not say. There is a liberty left to us in this matter; and none of us must seek to abridge his brother's liberty in it. But ask me how often I ought to receive this sacrament—I have an answer ready in a

moment: as often as I have an opportunity in the congregation with which I may be worshipping. I do not say, brethren, that this or that man among you is wrong, in occasionally turning away from the Lord's table; all I say is, I could not turn away from it with him. There would be something within my own mind, that would stop me; it would be so painful to me to do so, that I must turn back. And were I to speak the truth, I had rather in this matter be in my state of mind, than his.

But let this pass. Rites and ceremonies, however sacred or however divinely appointed, are rites and ceremonies still. The Lord's Supper is in itself, after all, an emblem and shadow. The main question for us to ask is, what have we had to do—what have we to do still—with the great reality? The death of Christ is of infinitely greater importance to us, dear brethren, than any memorial of it; a real

faith in that death, of far more consequence to every one of us, than our observance of any memorial. I may go to the Lord's table a thousand times over, and yet live and die an ungodly sinner; I cannot really go once by faith to the Lord's blood, but there is a breach, and an eternal one, between my sins and me. The guilt of them is for ever withdrawn; the power of them is for ever broken. In life and death I am a new man.

What a difference, brethren, between these two things! May you never undervalue the Lord's table! I could almost say, may you never willingly turn your back on it! But there is a more earnest and a more important prayer, brethren, that I would put up for you, and for myself: oh! may the God of all mercy keep us from undervaluing the Lord's death! May He lead us to value *that* above, and infinitely *above*, the most sacred, the most holy commemoration of it!

STONE ALTARS AND CREDENCE TABLES.

Judgment of

THE^d RIGHT. HON. SIR HERBERT JENNER FUST,

Dean of the Arches;

PRONOUNCED ON-FRIDAY, FEB. 1, 1845.

Faulkner v. Litchfield and Stearn.

THIS is an appeal from a decree of the Chancellor of the diocese of Ely, in the Consistorial Court of that diocese, in which court an application was made on behalf of the churchwardens of the parish of the Holy Sepulchre, in the town of Cambridge, for a faculty to confirm certain alterations, repairs, and restorations which had been made under a former faculty granted for that purpose; and the prayer of the petition also extended to such other alterations and repairs, as were not comprised in the former faculty. Now, it was on the behalf of the churchwardens and minister that the faculty was prayed in the first instance, and the former faculty was granted to them: but to the second application the minister was not a party; on the contrary, it appears, that, after the citation was returned, he appeared to oppose the grant of the faculty; and therefore the question before the Chancellor of the diocese of Ely was between the churchwardens, on the one hand, and Mr. Faulkner, the minister, on the other, whether *vicar* or perpetual curate of the parish does not appear. The churchwardens to whom the former faculty had been granted were Mr. Benjamin Jordan and Mr. William Ekin; but when the confirmatory faculty was applied for, Mr. Litchfield and Mr. Stearn were the churchwardens. The faculty was originally granted on the

25th of February 1842, and by that faculty the minister and churchwardens were authorised "to repair the church, and, as to such parts thereof as had been rendered unightly by injudicious repairs, to restore the same as near as may be according to the original design, and according to a design and plan deposited in the registry of the court," stated to have been made by a skilful architect. Now, under this original faculty the works were proceeded with, and had nearly arrived at completion, and the Church was nearly prepared for being reopened for the performance of Divine service, when Mr. Faulkner, the minister of the parish, appears to have received for the first time (as he states) an intimation of the intention to erect in the Church the articles which are now the subject of discussion, namely, a stone communion-table, and also a credence-table; and Mr. Faulkner states, that if he had been aware of the proceeding he would not have allowed them to be erected in the Church, but would have opposed their erection. The works were, however, proceeded with, and on the 29th of February last year, a vestry meeting of the parish-*oners* was called, and a report was made of what had been done under the faculty originally granted, and this report contained a detail of all the different items (under 24 heads), to which report it will

be necessary for the Court more particularly to advert. At this meeting the minister took the chair, and a resolution was proposed and seconded, which was carried with only the dissentient voice of the minister, to this effect:—"That the report be adopted; that the works therein detailed, as done, or intended to be done, had the full sanction and approval of the meeting; and that the churchwardens should take such measures by obtaining a further faculty, or otherwise, as might be deemed necessary, for the due ratification of the said works and otherwise, in order to carry into effect the former resolutions of the vestry relative to a restoration of the Church, and also for selling the three bells, now no longer necessary, and appropriating the proceeds of such sale in aid of the expenses incident to the restoration of the said Church." A further resolution was also proposed and carried, "that the thanks of the meeting and of the parish generally were due to the members of the Camden Society,"—that is, a Society established at Cambridge under that title,—“for their assistance in restoring the Church, and to the Rev. Archdeacon Thorp especially,” who is the President of that Society, “for his courtesy in explaining the various forms necessary for ratifying the former faculty, and applying for another to confirm it.” Now, this resolution having been proposed and seconded, the minister declined to put it, and resigned the chair, which was taken by Mr. Litchfield, the senior churchwarden at the time. Now, in pursuance of this resolution, an application was made for a further faculty, to the effect I have stated, on the 26th of March, last year, and a citation issued, reciting the former faculty, and stating what had been done, as detailed in the report made to the vestry, and calling upon the minister and churchwardens, and all other persons having any interest, to appear and show cause why a faculty should not be granted ratifying and confirming the before-mentioned faculty, and also (so far as may not be comprised therein) “the restoration, renovations, repairs, alterations, erections, and other works in the said Church and chancel, specified in the aforesaid report, and also for selling the bells, no longer necessary, heretofore belonging to the said Church.” Upon the return of the citation, Mr. Faulkner, the minister of the parish, appeared to oppose the faculty.

The cause came on for hearing on the 25th of July, before the Rev. the Chancellor of Ely, assisted by a learned advocate of this court, as his assessor. The cause was elaborately argued by two of the learned advocates, who have addressed this Court, and the result was, that the Chancellor, with the advice of his assessor, decreed the faculty to issue. Mr. Faulkner immediately appealed from this decree, and in the course of the last term the cause was very elaborately and ably argued by all the learned counsel engaged in it; and it now remains for the Court to pronounce its judgment upon the whole case, which being one of a somewhat novel character, and having excited considerable inter-

est, the Court thought it right to take time to consider the arguments, and to look into the authorities cited in support of them; and many of these not being of very ready access, the Court requested it might be furnished with a list of them, which request was readily complied with by the learned counsel. This request was addressed only to the learned counsel in the cause; but it seems that this intimation was considered by some parties as a general invitation, and I have received various communications, some with signatures attached to them, and others anonymous, to many of whom I have to express my thanks for reference to authorities not mentioned in the argument, and to which I have had recourse. I have also received communications from other persons, to whom I do not think any thanks are due, as their object is to produce an impression upon the mind of the Court in respect of the judgment it has to pronounce in this case. Amongst other communications of this kind is one in the shape of a pamphlet, purporting to be a copy of a sermon preached by a Rev. clergyman, entitled “The Restoration of Churches is the Restoration of Popery; proved and illustrated from the authenticated publications of the Cambridge Camden Society;” with extracts (said to be so) from certain publications of that Society, and containing the opinions of the writer of that sermon (as it is called) upon subjects connected with the architectural alterations of Churches. By whom this communication was made to me I know not, but that it was done to prejudice the mind of the Court is evident from a written paper placed within the leaves of the book to this effect:—"Mr. Faulkner, like Mr. Henslowe, is, I maintain, contending for a great and vital principle in his resistance to the innovations of the Cambridge Camden Society; and we are bound to give him credit, likewise,"—a line being drawn under the word "him"—“for genuine courage, acute perception, and a tender conscience.” This was an unfortunate course to be taken by the person who sent this communication, and it was an entire misapprehension to suppose that this attempt to interfere with the administration of justice could produce the effect intended; the only effect it could produce was, to make the Court more cautious how it adopted the views advocated by the writer, and to doubt whether the view it took was a correct one. I may also mention that I have received a letter addressed to me by Mr. Faulkner, in the shape of a circular,—not addressed to me as Dean of the Arches, but as pre-riding over one of the colleges in the university of Cambridge,—soliciting a subscription to enable him to defray the heavy expense of prosecuting this appeal, the object of which was to assert a great and important principle. To address such a letter to the judge who has to decide this cause, could not but appear an act deserving of reprehension; but I believe it was addressed to me as Master of Trinity-hall, in the university of Cambridge, the circular being sent to other heads of colleges, and I acquit Mr. Faulkner of any intentional disrespect to the

Court, or of any intention to prejudice the impartial administration of justice.

Now, the question I have to decide is between the churchwardens and the minister of the parish. With the Camden Society I have nothing whatever to do, save that they are incidentally mentioned as the persons under whose direction the works for the restoration of the Church have been carried on. I can only look at the conduct of the parties before the Court. The motives of the parties have nothing to do with the question, which is simply on the construction of the rubrics in the Book of Common Prayer, confirmed by the Act of Uniformity, 13 and 14 Charles II., and the canons of 1603. It is entirely a question of law, in which the motives of the parties ought to have no weight with the Court. The simple question is this:—Is this, or is it not, a communion-table within the meaning of the rubric, within the meaning of the 82nd canon, and of the general laws, canons, and constitutions ecclesiastical of this realm? If this is a communion-table within the provision and meaning of the statute (as I call it), the Court cannot hold that it is an "unauthorised innovation," and on that ground refuse to confirm the faculty; on the other hand, if it be not a communion-table within the meaning of the law, to be collected from the sources to which I have alluded, then the Court would be bound to refuse the faculty prayed for. If the rubrics have expressly decided that a communion-table should be of wood, and not fixed, but moveable, the Court could not authorise the erection of a stone table fixed to the wall or floor of the Church; and if, on a consideration of the authorities, it should appear that, according to the construction of the word "table" in the rubrics and canons, it should be of wood and moveable, the Court must proceed in precisely the same manner as if it had been expressly so declared. I repeat, therefore, that the question is, whether this is a communion-table or not, within the meaning of the canon and rubrics? I assume, that neither the churchwardens, nor the minister of the parish, are actuated by any improper motives; that the churchwardens have no covert design of introducing Popish rites or ceremonies, as suggested; and on the other hand, I give Mr. Faulkner the credit of being influenced by a conscientious conviction that, in opposing this grant, he is opposing that which is repugnant to the laws and constitutions of the Reformed Church, and that he is not actuated by bigotry and prejudice.

The facts of the case, as set forth in the act on petition, are these:—This ancient Church, dedicated in the year 1101, having been found to be dilapidated and rendered unsightly by injudicious repairs, it was thought desirable to restore it as near as might be to its original design, and according to a plan prepared by a skilful architect, and with reference to which a faculty was granted. The works were executed under the superintendence of the Cambridge Camden Society, and a committee was formed, consisting of the minister and churchwardens, some of

the paragoners, and the president and some of the members of the Society. The expense was to be defrayed by voluntary contributions and the assistance of the Society. In the progress of the works an individual, whose name is not mentioned, offered to make a free gift to the parish of a stone communion-table, and what is called a credence table, also of stone. This offer was accepted, and that which forms the present subject of discussion was accordingly placed in the chancel, without, as is alleged, the privacy and consent of the minister, he having been absent from Cambridge. It appears, that this stone structure consists of a slab, supported by three upright slabs, all of stone, resting upon a lower slab, also of stone, and that the weight is about two tons; that the lower part is embedded in mortar or concrete, about an inch below the floor of the chancel, which is built up to the table and covered with encaustic tiles; and that the table was also made to adhere to the east wall of the chancel. There is some dispute as to this last act, but it is sworn on one side, and not contradicted on oath. If the fact were material in the view which the Court is disposed to take of this case, it must be taken to be as stated in the affidavit. But the Court is satisfied to give the churchwardens the benefit of any alteration which has been made since the first erection. This structure Mr. Faulkner contends is a stone altar, or altar table, such as is erected and used with the credence-table for idolatrous and heretical purposes in Popish countries; that the rubrics and canons require that the communion-table should be of wood and moveable. On the other hand, the churchwardens deny that it is an altar, or such as is used in Popish countries for idolatrous and heretical purposes; and that it is essential to the preservation of uniformity in the internal arrangements of the Church. They also deny that Mr. Faulkner was ignorant of the intention to place the communion-table and credence table in the chancel; or, if he was ignorant, they say he was wilfully so, for that he was a member of the committee, and had due notice of its meetings. To this it is rejoined, that Mr. Faulkner had no reason to suppose that the tenour of the faculty originally granted would be departed from; and therefore that he did not think his attendance necessary; that the substitution of the stone altar for the communion-table formed no part of the original plan; and, looking at the part of the plan where the credence-table stands, there appear three pencil lines, describing where it should be placed, so that in the original specification it does not appear that a credence-table was originally contemplated; this therefore would appear to have been an after-thought, in consequence of the offer made by the liberal individual to make a free gift to the parish. The churchwardens then annex a list of Churches in which communion-tables of stone, fixed, are to be found. I do not find any reference to either of the other three Churches, in the number of those in which stone-tables have been used. I do not find, that when the Temple Church was repaired, the old communion-table was replaced by one made of stone.

Now, the question is, what is the real meaning of the word "table" in the canons and the rubrics of the Church? In the first place, it is contended properly and truly, that the present question must be determined by the Act of Uniformity and the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, which are incorporated and made part of it. But in order to arrive at the true meaning of the expression in the present Act of Uniformity and in the present rubrics, it may not be immaterial to refer to the alterations made in the rubrics at the time of the Reformation, and from that time down to the passing of the present Act of Uniformity in 1662, when we shall find that the word "altar" has been changed to "table." We all know, that after the Reformation one of the doctrines of the Church of Rome which was renounced by the Church of England, was the doctrine of transubstantiation; and it will be found, that the material and the form of the altar in the Romish Church are connected with this doctrine of transubstantiation, and with the eucharist as a sacrifice. It was contended, that by the rubrics of the Roman Catholic Church altars must be built of stone, and must be immovable, and various canons from the body of the canon law were cited to show that the altar must be of stone, and fixed; and, if not, it must be re-consecrated. The Court does not think it necessary to go through all these authorities on this part of the case, because it is not incumbent upon the Court to pronounce whether this is or is not an altar. At the same time, it may not be inexpedient to consider what was the origin of the altars, as used in the Roman Catholic Churches, of what material they were constructed, and of what form, in order to arrive more readily at the meaning and intention of those who directed the removal of stone altars and the substitution of tables.

From the authorities cited by Cardinal Bona, in his work *De Rebus Liturgicis*, we learn that the altars used in the early ages of Christianity were made of wood, and in the form of a table; that about the year 509 they began to be of stone, although the wooden tables were not altogether abolished. The form altered with the material. Sometimes the altar or table was supported by one pillar, sometimes by four or two, and latterly they assumed the form of a tomb, as of the Sepulchre of the Martyrs, whence they derive their name; and there is no doubt that at the time of the Reformation the altars in the English Churches were of stone, fixed and immovable.

At the time of the separation of the Church of England from that of Rome, amongst the many points of difference between them, one of the most important was that respecting the doctrine of transubstantiation in the supper of the Lord, which, as is declared by the 28th Article of our Church, "cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture." In the reign of Henry VIII., the feeling against this doctrine was not so decided as it afterwards became; nor did any material change take place in the early part of the reign of Edward VI., for we find in his first Prayer-book 1549, that the mass was still to be celebrated in the

order for the Supper of the Lord, "commonly called the Mass;" and the word "altar" was used in different parts of the service as set forth in that book. But in his second Prayer-book, 1552, the terms "mass" and "altar" were altogether omitted. The order was, for the administration of "the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion." The table was to stand in the body of the Church, or in the chancel, where morning and evening service were appointed to be said; and the priest, instead of standing in the front of the altar, was to stand at the north side of the "table," and so on through the service. But in the interval between the publication of the first Prayer-book in 1549, and the publication of the second in 1552, certain events had taken place, and certain orders and injunctions had been issued, to which it is necessary to refer. In 1547 an order had been issued to take away and destroy all tables, images, and other monuments of feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatries, and superstitions; and in 1550, Ridley, Bishop of London, issued an injunction to the same effect. Bishop Ridley's injunctions are to the following effect:—"Whereas some of us use the Lord's board after the form of a table, and some as an altar, whereby dissension is perceived to arise among the unlearned, therefore wishing a godly unity to be observed in all our dioceses, and for that the form of a table may more move and turn the simple from the old superstitious opinions of the Popish mass, and to the right use of the Lord's Supper, we exhort the curates, churchwardens, and questmen here present to erect and set up the Lord's board after the form of an honest table, decently covered, in such place of the choir or chancel as shall be thought most meet by their discretion, so that the ministers with the communicants may have their place separated from the rest of the people; and to take down and abolish all other by-altars or tables." These injunctions were of course confined in the first instance to the diocese of London and to the form of an exhortation. But there was an Order in Council issued to Bishop Ridley, strictly charging and commanding him, for avoiding strife and contention, to take down altars and place communion tables in their stead: "We especially charge and command you, for the avoiding of all strife and contention about the standing or taking away of the said altars, to give order throughout all your diocese, that with all diligence all the altars in every Church or Chapel be taken down, and instead of them a table be set up in some convenient part of the chancel, to serve for the ministration of the blessed communion." And it appears from Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, that on the 18th of November, 1550, letters were sent to every bishop throughout England, to "pluck down altars." This "plucking down and removing of altars," and the substitution of "honest tables" in their place, was for the avowed purpose of "moving and turning the simple from the old superstitions of the Popish mass." The change intended, therefore, must have been something more than nominal; it must have been substantial. If a change of name only had been intended,

there could have been no necessity for removing the altars, since they could have served the office of tables. The alterations, therefore, in the short reign of Edward VI., are very important for the consideration of the Court.

In the short reign of Mary, which followed, one of her first acts was the repeal of all the statutes passed in that of Edward VI., respecting religion, and things reverted to the same state as they were at the end of Henry VIII.'s reign; altars were to be re-erected in the Churches, and penalties were imposed upon those who, of their own accord, pulled down or destroyed them, and mass was again celebrated. But in the year 1558 Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne, and when she repealed the statutes of Queen Mary, the statutes of Edward VI., were revived. In 1559, orders were issued by Queen Elizabeth for substituting the communion of the sacrament for the high mass, and for placing tables in the Churches to the same effect as those issued by Edward VI.:—"Whereas Her Majesty understandeth, that in many and sundry parts of the realm the altars of the Churches be removed, and tables placed for the administration of the holy sacrament, according to the form of the law therefore provided; and in some places the altars be not yet removed, upon opinion conceived of some other order to be taken by her Majesty's visitors; in the order whereof, saving for uniformity, there seemeth no matter of great moment so that the sacrament be duly and reverently administered, yet for the observation of the one uniformity through the whole realm, and for the better imitation of the law in that behalf, It is ordered that no altar be taken down but by oversight of the curate of the Church and the churchwardens, or one of them at the least; and that the holy table in every Church be decently made and set in the place where the altar stood, and there commonly covered, as thereto belongeth, and as shall be appointed by the visitors, and so to stand, saving when the communion of the sacrament is to be distributed, at which time the same shall be so placed in good sort within the chancel, as whereby the minister may be more conveniently heard of the communicants in his prayer and ministrations, and the communicants also more conveniently and in more number communicate with the minister, and after the communion done from time to time the same holy table to be placed where it stood before." From this order it is manifest, that the tables here meant were something very different from the altars, and that they were moveable; for the direction that it was to be placed where it stood before, could not apply to an immoveable stone altar. In 1564 it appears that Queen Elizabeth issued advertisements, directing amongst other things that parishes should provide "a decent table standing on a frame" for the communion; an expression applicable rather to a wooden table than one made of stone. In 1569 Archbishop Parker's visitation inquiries go to the same fact, as to the communion tables and taking down of altars. In 1571 Archbishop Grindall's injunctions are remarkable for their expressions:—

"All altars to be pulled down to the ground and the altar stones defaced, and bestowed to some common use; the prayers and other service appointed for the ministration of the holy communion, to be said and done at the communion-table." Nothing can more clearly demonstrate the determined manner, in which the measures for the utter subversion of the superstitions connected with the Popish mass were carried on, than these orders and injunctions, the great object being the annihilation of the fixed, immoveable stone altars, and the substitution of wood moveable tables in their place. It has been said, that these injunctions, and orders and advertisements were of no legal or binding authority, not being sanctioned by act of Parliament. This is by no means clear; but they are referred to and relied upon, without being impugned, by Mr. Sheffeld on his trial for breaking a painted window in a Church at New Sarum, and again by Archbishop Laud on his impeachment; but, whether they were of binding authority or not, the fact is that they were acted upon, that they were carried into full execution. The altars were destroyed and tables of wood set up in their stead; and it is this fact which is alone material for the purpose of the present question.

We now approach a most important period, when the contest raged between high and low Church in the reign of Charles I. Its origin may be found in Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*. It has been shown that the stone altars were removed and tables of wood set up; the questions then agitated were as to the place in which the table should stand, and its position. The puritans contended that the proper place for the table when the communion was administered, was in the body of the Church before the chancel-door; and afterwards in the chancel, but placed tablewise, and not altarwise; that is, that one of the ends of the table was to be placed towards the east, so that one of the larger sides might be to the north, the priest being directed to stand at the north side and not at the north end of the table. The high churchmen, on the contrary, contended that as the injunctions ordered that the tables when not in use should stand where the altar used to stand, it should consequently be placed as the altar was. These apparently important matters were the source of violent contentions. Tracts were published, neither remarkable for courtesy of language, or for accurate statements of facts. (The learned Judge then referred to the following tracts:—*A Cool from the Altar, 1636-7*, written by Dr. Heyling: *The Holy Table, Name and Thing*, &c.) There is some ground for supposing that the last named work was written by Williams, Bishop of Lincoln. It appears that a dispute had arisen between the vicar of Grantham and his parishioners, respecting the proper place for the table. The vicar insisted that it ought to stand at the upper end of the chancel, against the east wall. The parishioners contended that it should stand in the body of the Church. The vicar removed it from that situation, and placed it in the chancel. The

alderman of the borough replaced it in its former situation, and a formal complaint was made to the bishop, and it was stated that the vicar had threatened to "build a stone altar." The bishop delivered his opinion in writing, in the strongest and most decided terms, to the effect that such an erection would be illegal. This seems to settle the question as to stone altars at this time, and, being an admonition from a bishop to one of his clergy, is entitled to considerable weight; and the grounds upon which he founds his opinion, are the orders, injunctions, and canons. (The learned Judge then proceeded to consider the case of Archbishop Laud, who became involved in these unfortunate disputes, by introducing many of what were at that time called "innovations," an unfortunate term, as Lord Clarendon called it, and which formed part of the articles of impeachment against him.)

We now come to the time of the Restoration, when the present Prayer-book and rubric were framed, when the term "table" was introduced, and the communion-table remained in the same situation as from the time of Elizabeth; that is, that it was of wood, not stone; and moveable, not fixed. The next question is, has any alteration been since made? In the rubrics of the present Book of Common Prayer the term "table" is repeatedly introduced, and in several places consistent only with the idea of an ordinary table of wood, which is moveable.

Looking to the meaning and interpretation of the word "table" itself, what would be the ordinary construction which a person would naturally put upon the word? Would he consider that it was an article similar to that represented by the model now on the table of the court? would that be the natural and proper sense which he would attach to the word? It might be possible, by ingenuity to show that such an article is a table, as any flat surface raised from the ground, and supported by pillars, may be called a table. But that would not be the meaning which would suggest itself to the mind of any person, who read the rubric in its ordinary and popular sense; no one would suppose the term "table" to mean an article formed of slabs of stone, fixed, and imbedded in mortar or concrete. My opinion therefore is, that according to the true construction of the rubric, this is not a communion-table within the intent and meaning of the rubric, which meant a wooden table, capable of being removed, and not an immovable stone table.

But it has been argued, that as the sacraments of the Church and of the minister were to be the same as in the second year of Edward VI., and as stone altars were then in existence in the Churches, they ought to remain so at this day. If this argument were to be carried out, it would go to show that all communion-tables ought to be removed and altars erected in their stead; and this would be conclusive against the grant of this faculty, which is

not for a stone altar, but a communion-table. But, in fact, the altar was not considered as an ornament, but as a parcel of the building itself. Durandus says, "*Puro ornamento ecclesie in tribus consistit; id est, in ornatu ecclesie chori et altaris;*" not the altar itself. I am therefore of opinion on this part of the case, that I must reverse the sentence pronounced by the Chancellor of the diocese of Ely, and overrule the petition for the faculty in its present form. These observations are applicable to the stone table or altar.

A few words will dispose of the other point as to the credence-table. I do not find any sufficient information to enable me to judge when this article was first introduced into the Romish Church or into our English Churches. It is clear, that they were in use at the time of Archbishop Laud, and before his time. It is admitted by the learned counsel on both sides that the term is derived from the Italian language; but in Adelung's German Dictionary we have the following definition of the word:—"Credenzien, verb, reg. act., from the Italian '*credenzare*,' to taste before hand the meats and drink before they were offered to be enjoyed by another;—as in Court practice, which was performed by the cupbearers and carvers, who for this reason were also called '*credenzieri*.' Hence, also, the *credenz teller*—credence plate—on which the cupbearers *credenced* the wine; and in general, a plate on which a person offers anything to another. *Credenz tische*, credence table, a sideboard, an artificial cupboard with a table for the purpose of arranging in order and keeping the drinking apparatus therein." In the Greek and Latin Churches something of the same kind was in use under another name, as I find from two of the tracts to which I before alluded. The word used to describe it is "*προθεσιν*," that is, table, or preparation, or proposition, as on it were placed the elements before they were placed on the high altar for consecration. I am of opinion, therefore, that the credence table must fall under the same principle as the other, as it is immediately connected with the other structure, and does not appear to be required or sanctioned by any law, canon, or constitution. I shall, therefore, not include that in the faculty.

The other items seem proper subjects, and I should not be justified in refusing to grant a faculty for them; and perhaps the Court may direct the faculty to pass, if so prayed. But I am clearly of opinion that, in its present state, I am bound to refuse the confirmation of this faculty. With respect to the question of costs, as Mr. Fanliker was obliged to come here as an appellant, and has succeeded in his appeal, I shall not do full justice to him if I were not to condemn the respondents in the costs. I therefore reverse the sentence of the Court below, and condemn the churchwardens in the costs of the proceedings on the appeal.

A SERMON,

BY THE HON. AND REV. BAPTIST W. NOEL, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
FEBRUARY 2, 1845.

"He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."—1 John ii. 6.

To "abide in Christ," or to be Christ's disciple, is to have seen reason to believe, that He, as God and man in one Person, has wrought out a redemption for His people; has suffered in their stead, and provided for them a free and a complete salvation. It is to receive Him, therefore, as our Saviour and our Lord; to commit ourselves to His care and to His direction; to trust Him to save us from guilt and ruin, from eternal death and from the wrath of God. It is, moreover, to exercise this trust continually. This is what is meant in Scripture by "abiding in Him." And the apostle states in these words, that all who profess to do so, ought consequently to live as Christ lived: "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked."

To illustrate this statement of the apostle, let us first select two or three particulars, in which Christians ought to live as Christ lived; and then mention a few reasons, why they ought to live so. By which we may the more feel the force of these words—"He that saith he abideth in Him," he who professes to be a follower of Christ, "ought himself also so to walk even as He walked."

I. In the first place, those who profess to be Christ's disciples, ought to take Him as their example in bearing their appointed sufferings. For He has in several places left this on record, that it is His will, that those who are His disciples, should take up *their* cross, as He took up His. You find it thus stated in the tenth of St. Matthew: "he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me." Christ took up His cross; His disciples should "follow after Him" in taking up theirs. And this command of Christ, to imitate Him in this particular of bearing suffering as He bore His sufferings, implies especially two things.

In the first place, contentedly to bear whatever sufferings God by His providence, and His all-controlling will, imposes on us; not to be discontented, irritable and despondent, at any thing which God appoints, and which we cannot avoid. Our Lord has set us the highest example of this resignation, when, in the depth of His sufferings, He said—"If it be possible take away this cup from Me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt." To walk, therefore, "as Christ walked," is to say perpetually with respect to every thing that may give us anxiety and pain—"Nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt."

But there was another characteristic in Christ's endurance of sufferings, perhaps yet more important to us, because it relates to a temper still more constantly to be in exercise. You will find this illustrated in the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew. Jesus foresaw all those sufferings, which He afterwards so patiently bore; and we learn from several verses in that chapter, the temper in which our Lord met them. He "showed to His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." That "He must" do so. If He foresaw them, He could avoid them; but He "steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem;" He consented to that appointment of His heavenly Father, chose to enter that scene of suffering, meant to go through it, would not be turned from the course He had prescribed to Himself by any foresight of His sufferings, pursued the great end of His mission into this world, without deviation by one single step, or for one single moment. His followers could not enter into these feelings: "Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee;" it must

never be, that the Messiah should suffer all this indignity and shame; it must never be, that you should be thus in the hands of your enemies; 'be it far from Thee.' Upon which, our Lord answered Peter, "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou art an offence unto Me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." 'You want a religion, that should secure ease, and honour, and pleasure and peace; you do not love the way to heaven, which God has marked out; 'thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men;' therefore, get thee behind Me, enemy.' And after our Lord had shown this disposition Himself, He called upon His followers to imitate Him: "then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." To walk, therefore "as Christ walked," with respect to the endurance of suffering, is to ascertain distinctly by the study of God's Word, what is the course of conduct He wishes us to pursue, what are the ends He designs us to aim at, and, having ascertained that course, to resolve upon it, and to enter upon it; and if in that course any obstacles present themselves, to determine to go through those obstacles; if there are any painful consequences entailed by them, to consent to those consequences; but to make this the steady purpose of our lives—that we do the will of God. This it is, "to walk as Christ walked;" this is "taking up the cross," as He took it up; this is consenting to meet it, and assume it, and bear it, if it must be so in the way of duty prescribed thus by the plain commands of God.

He, then, who "walks as Christ walked," will thus, without fear, without despondency, without impetuosity and passion, without enthusiasm, with calm deliberation and steady purpose, determine to pursue the course of duty God has called him to pursue, whatever the consequences may be. The apostle Paul has set this before us strikingly, in the twelfth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews: "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," every Christian living amongst a number of persons, over whom his example may have some influence, "let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that

was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." That is the spirit, in which those live, who "walk as Christ walked:" setting their hearts on glory, and looking stedfastly towards it, and, being enabled to descry it through all the mists of trouble still glowing on their souls, to pursue it stedfastly as Jesus did.

In this course, however, it is impossible but that Christians should meet, as Christ met, with those who would oppose this course. Our Saviour did not find a universal welcome, when He came into this world to be "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" but on the contrary, He found many, who knew nothing of His glory, and were disposed to turn away from Him with dislike. One simple incident of this kind is mentioned in the ninth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, illustrating how we should "walk as He walked." As He was travelling towards Jerusalem on foot, He was about to enter into a village of the Samaritans; but they would not receive Him, because He was evidently advancing towards Jerusalem. "And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village." He, therefore, did not in any manner, nor for one moment, resent the affront which He had received, but quietly turned from those who had treated Him with indignity, and rebuked His disciples for being of an opposite temper: teaching them on this occasion, that if they would walk "as He walked," they must be gentle and forgiving towards those, who might offer them any indignity, or do them any wrong.

And if, on these slighter occasions, our Saviour showed this gentleness and meekness, how much more gloriously did He show it, when His patience and gentleness was most severely tried!—when He did not meet the dislike and contempt of a few ignorant villagers, but when the world were combined against Him! When the Scribes and Pharisees, when governors and military officers, when Jews and Roman soldiers and citizens, all formed one combined mass, united in nothing else but in hatred of Christ; then

He went "as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." He uttered no one threat; He did not exert His power in one act of vengeance; but He prayed for His murderers. And in doing so He left us an example, as the apostle Peter has very earnestly noticed to us, that we should tread in His steps, if we are His people. "For what glory is it," (he says in the second chapter of his first epistle,) "if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." To walk, then, "as Christ walked," is to have an unconquerable spirit of forgiveness; to be able on all occasions to forbear every act of vengeance; unsparingly to mortify every feeling of revenge; and on the contrary, to "overcome evil by good." He that walks "as Christ walked," will thus resemble Him, in bearing every wrong, that his enemies inflict upon him.

In these two respects, are we, if we are Christ's followers, called to imitate Him: first, as we have seen, in pursuing the path of duty through all obstacles; and secondly, in bearing with unconquerable gentleness all the resistance and opposition, which such a course may meet.

But Christians are called to travel this road *together*; to fight in this warfare by each other's side. They are not solitary pilgrims, or solitary soldiers; but they are pilgrims bound together to the same home, and they are united and marshalled in the same army. If God had been pleased to give them at once perfection, by their companionship they might have administered to each other nothing but support and consolation; but in fact it is far otherwise. We have all of us innumerable infirmities; and these infirmities try the temper of our fellow-Christians. But if we would "walk as Christ walked," we must manifest patience towards each other's infirmities. In this respect is Christ our Master set before us as an example. "We, then," says the apostle, speaking of himself, and others advanced in piety like as he was—"we, then, that

are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. For even Christ pleased not Himself. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God." The example of Christ leads His disciples, who are truly so, to bear each other's infirmities, and to receive each other as friends and brethren notwithstanding them; to endeavour in their daily conduct to minister to the comfort and satisfaction of those Christians, with whom they dwell; to be constantly thinking how they may promote their daily happiness. As God does not count any of our interests too insignificant for His notice; as Christ does not overlook any one of our wishes; so Christians, if they would "walk as Christ walked," must endeavour, day by day, not to please themselves, but to please their relations, their nearest friends, the members of their families, who believe in Christ as they do, and to be constantly augmenting the present enjoyment and the present happiness of those brethren, with whom they associate.

If it should further happen—and this happens constantly—that, yielding to these infirmities, our fellow-Christians should do wrong to us, the example of Christ calls us to forgive that wrong freely and fully. The apostle Paul has set before us the example of Christ in this respect likewise, when he says in the third chapter of the epistle to the Colossians—"Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Professed Christians—perhaps real Christians—those who have the character of real Christians, and whom we may recognise as such—sometimes act as though they did not believe it, but real Christians never can have occasion to live together as enemies, or to separate from each other as enemies. Whatever injury they inflict upon each other, there ought to be means by which this wrong may be atoned for—by which this quarrel may cease; for the apostle says—"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." To "walk as Christ walked," is, therefore, to have no enmity towards any Christian; no unappeased strife; no contention, in

which we are a party: to feel no anger, no revenge, to a single believer upon earth. This it is, to walk in this respect "as Christ walked."

But His example went much further, and He has set it before us in a more affecting light, on this particular point. For He has said—"This is My commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you;" "by this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." Now what was the love He manifested? "Greater love," He added, "hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends; ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." He looked upon His disciples as His friends, and He showed them the greatest instance of love a man can show, by laying down His life on their behalf. It is *this* love to our brethren, that Christ calls us to imitate. To "walk as He walked," is to have *this* kindness to our Christian brethren. The language of His Word is precise upon that point; the apostle John says—"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;" that is, we should be willing, as many of Christ's followers have been willing, when the circumstances call for it, to lay down our lives to promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of our brethren in Christ. Our infirmity never alters the rule of duty; our defects do not affect our obligations; we may come far short of this beautiful example of Christ, but it does not the less remain *the* pattern we are to copy. This is what God has called us to, if we are His followers: "he that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." In aiming at our own ultimate glory and felicity, in pursuing the ends for which God has placed us in this world, and looking forward to glory as the crown and end of our journey through life, we ought to cherish, as Christ did, a discriminating friendship towards all the children of God, growing in intensity as we grow in knowledge and in grace; ever shown forth most to those who, bearing most the image of Christ, are likewise best known to us; but exercised towards the whole family of God; nay, ready to pour forth towards the whole human race in undisguised benevolence.

Thus we have seen three particulars, in which we ought to "walk as Christ walked." We should pursue the path of duty, bearing willingly whatever troubles

that course of duty imposes; if, in the prosecution of our duty, we meet with any enmity from ungodly persons, we should meet it with an unvarying and unconquerable gentleness; and if we should further be exposed to any unkindness on the part of Christians, we must show them an unalterable friendship. We should be ready to do them the greatest acts of kindness.

This is the last particular, in which I will now bring before you the example of our Saviour. He never meant, that our love to our brethren ought to be inactive, a mere romance of feeling; but, like His own, it ought to appear in all the daily acts and tempers of life. He has set this before us as the temper we should cherish, and the conduct we should exhibit. If you look at the twentieth chapter of St. Matthew, you will see this principle laid down. "Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him. And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom." And when His disciples manifested indignation at this desire of the two brethren to be superior to them, "Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Jesus Christ spent His life on earth, in ministering in many ways to the happiness of others; and this sprang from that benevolence, which He felt towards all men, and from that affection, which He felt towards His disciples. He has bidden us, if we are His disciples, to imitate Him in this; and having this universal benevolence, and this discriminating regard to His people, to minister in consequence to their happiness, and continually to abound in those acts of kindness, by which that happiness may be promoted.

He gave us a very affecting illustration of what He meant by this rule; we find it thus recorded in the thirteenth chapter of St. John. "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God

and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." Never did conqueror, just reaching the term of all his efforts, just grasping at all for which his life and labours had been spent, manifest in the hour of triumph a lowliness like this. He knew that He was going to God as He came from God, about to sit down on His universal throne, and the agony of the cross intervened but for a moment; and then it was, that He laid aside His garments, girt Himself with a towel, knelt down on the ground, and began to wash His disciples' feet. He did it with a view to impress upon them a lesson, He would never have them forget. "So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than He that sent him."

If this one rule, illustrated by such an instance, were but written on all our hearts and obeyed in all our conduct, how would the happiness of countless thousands be promoted by it! What innumerable actions of lowly benevolence would result from it! Christians would abjure all pride, not in profession only, but in fact; not only would they recognise humility as a virtue in their creed, but they would detest pride in all its forms. They would look at the Saviour, just before rising to His glory, washing His disciples' feet, as the pattern they must ever copy. And having abjured pride and selfishness, they would delight in all the acts, by which they might promote the welfare of their fellow-Christians, and in doing those acts would count nothing beneath them. The very idea would vanish from their minds, that any thing which was an act of beneficence, could be beneath them. It would be stamped with all the dignity of the Redeemer's own character. They would see that this was their appointed road to the highest glory. They would abound throughout their lives in such actions.

Thus, like Him they serve, they would not live "to be ministered unto, but to minister;" to promote by all their faculties, time and property, the happiness of their fellow-men, till they were called into that world, where each will find his highest enjoyment in adding to the happiness of all besides.

In these four particulars, then, not to mention others, has our blessed Saviour "set us an example, that we should follow His steps:" resolved to fulfil our duty, and to bear the trials it may entail; patient of all the enmity, which ungodly persons may feel towards us on that account; forbearing towards each other's infirmities, sympathising in each other's welfare, feeling the truest friendship for our Christian brethren; and in consequence of these tempers, abounding in all the acts and habits, by which we may minister to their welfare.

What a blessed life we should live, if we could but "walk as Christ walked!" If only in these four particulars we imitated Christ, what an example we should set to one another! And these are but a few among so many particulars. Our text calls us to look at all Christ did, and all Christ was, and imitate the whole. It bids us consider what the ends were, which He set before Him; what the rules were, by which He pursued those ends; in what temper He pursued them; who were the companions that He chose; and what were the relaxations He permitted to Himself. Our text would call us to observe how He acted towards the poor; towards little children; towards the sorrowful; towards the tempted; towards His own people; towards His bitter enemies: to be in all these relations what Christ was. It would bid us remember, that like Him we are placed here to bear witness to the truth, and to live out the truth; in fact to endeavour to "grow up into Christ in all things," and show we are His disciples by being like Him.

II. Let us now notice, very briefly, two or three among many of the reasons why we should walk thus. For the apostle says, that he who professes to abide in Christ, "ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." I will only mention four very obvious reasons.

In the first place, those who are redeemed ought to live as their Redeemer lived, because they recognise Him to be the pattern of all excellence. He came into this world on purpose to exhibit what

a human being ought to be; and He took the lowest position in society, that He might show what *all* human beings ought to be; that there might be no excuse for any one not resembling Christ. He has set this before us, because it is the pattern which will restore us to our lost perfection; and in imitating which we should once more become what Adam was, what our nature was, what God meant us originally to be. And in being this, we should evidently become that which conduces in every respect to our own highest welfare, that which must be the most useful to all around us, that which must in the highest degree honour God. Christ, in setting before us this pattern, has clearly shown what our profession of discipleship obliges us to be; we should resemble Him whom we profess to follow, and if He is "the firstborn among many brethren," His brethren ought to resemble Him in character and conduct.

In the next place, those who are redeemed ought to endeavour to please their Redeemer. Do we "abide in Him?"—that is, do we depend on Him for every blessing? have we received innumerable mercies through His love already, and are we expecting from His grace mercies that will never cease? is our heart now filled with joy, through His love, and will that joy grow on even to eternity? Then we should please Him, who has been this wonderful benefactor to us; and those who are redeemed, ought therefore to resemble their Redeemer, thus to please Him. He has urged this upon us; He has told us, that if we are His followers, we must "walk as He walked;" we know that this pleases Him, and certainly if we have these hopes and prospects, we should wish to please Him in all things.

In the next place, those who have been redeemed, ought to count it one of the highest objects of their existence, to glorify and serve Him who has been their Redeemer. Let any disciple of Christ ask himself, what object he can have in life higher than this, or more reasonable than this. I feel sure, that every Christian will place this in the very first rank amongst his obligations, that he should glorify his Redeemer. Has He by His own precious blood rescued us from misery, and secured our glory? does He mean to admit us where He is, to share in His immortality, honour, and bliss? Surely, then, it is a very little thing, that in the few years

we live on earth, we should give Him the highest glory in our power. But nothing can more honour Him, than to "walk as He walked." It is by this, that Christ will be most seen in the world to be glorious; it is by this, that His enemies must be most readily silenced. One such example is worth a thousand refutations of scepticism, and of false religion. It does not merely answer the argument—it answers the heart. It makes men not only cease from reasoning against Christ's Gospel, but cease from hating it. And thus, all who have the hopes Christ has given, ought on this account to "walk as He walked."

But, in the fourth place, we may add, that it is God's declared purpose, that all the followers of Jesus Christ should thus walk. He has determined from all eternity, that every person who should be renewed by His grace, and justified by the righteousness of Christ, should be justified and renewed for this end—that he might become like the Redeemer who rescued him. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." It was the eternal purpose of the Father, that Christ should be the first-born, the chief, the highest, "among many brethren," to Him, and to each other. They must be His brethren in resembling Him, and it was the eternal purpose of God, that all who should become His brethren, should be conformed to His image. If, therefore, we do not "walk as Christ walked," we have the most fatal proof, and blot upon our character, marking that we are not His brethren, marking that our profession is a deception, that we have deceived ourselves if we have not meant to delude others; that if we are not guilty of the gross hypocrisy of assuming a name which we *know* does not belong to us, we have been guilty of another hypocrisy, not less fatal in its results, by which we have imposed upon ourselves with the supposition, that a formal outside religion is that which will constitute us disciples of Christ and heirs of heaven. If, then, we would have peace here, or reach glory hereafter, we must, according to the fixed purpose of God, who "calls us to His kingdom and glory," "walk as Christ walked."

Let me, in conclusion, earnestly beg those in this congregation who are the

followers of Jesus Christ, to lay this obligation on their consciences; to think over it much; and to make a resolution in the strength of God this night, that they will endeavour more nearly to resemble Christ. Every deficiency, of which we are conscious, instead of making us despondent, while it does indeed humble us, ought only to lead us to fresh exertion. We are called by our most gracious Saviour to "walk as He walked," and we are conscious that in many respects we have not so walked; we see that there is grievous defect attaching to every part of our obedience, that in many things we are most unlike Him, and yet we ought to resemble Him fully. Henceforth, brethren, if we are Christ's, let us set before us His perfect pattern, study it cheerfully, recal it often, fill our minds with the glory of it, see what a beautiful portrait of human excellence Christ has set when He became Emmanuel, and took human nature into conjunction with Deity, that on this earth in our nature He might show us how a servant of God should walk. Let us set before us this high pattern, according to His own intention, as that which He means us to copy; and if we are not called to the same acts, at least let us share in the same spirit, and in that spirit daily be travelling onward to our eternal home.

In so doing, let us never forget, that while the example is itself attractive, and calculated to strengthen every resolution we form, the Spirit of God is nigh at hand to bless the exertions we make, and to hear the prayers we utter. And more—let me remind you, brethren, that if you take this course, it is the course God blesses—uniformly blesses—blesses with respect to all His people; not only among rare instances, not to some happy exceptions, but uniformly. "We all," says the apostle Paul, in the second epistle to the Corinthians, the third chapter—"we all, with open" or unveiled "face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." All Christians, while they behold in the Gospel, as the clear mirror of God's perfections, the reflection of the character of the Lord Jesus, and His glory as Emmanuel, are transformed into the same image; progressively step by step, day by day, becoming less unlike their Master. And this "by the Spirit of the Lord;" He blessing the meditation, and cherishing every effort

which the disciples of Christ make.

If, then, this course is open to each disciple of Christ to take, and he knows the blessed results, let us take it. Especially let those take it, who have this day assembled together at His table, and there given the public pledge that they belong to Christ, that they have assumed His name, that they depend on Him for life, that they look to Him to be blessed, that they resolve to serve Him here below. Let all those, who as a band confederate in the service of the Redeemer, have taken those memorials of His love to-day, take care that from this day they more earnestly than ever endeavour to "walk as He walked." "He that saith he abideth in Him," ought to walk as He walked; yon, my brethren, have "said that you abide in Christ." You said it to-day; you said it at that table of the Lord; you said it by eating that bread, and by drinking that wine. It was your significant expression that you were Christ's, and Christ was yours; that you took Christ to your hearts, and gave up yourselves to Christ as His servants. You, professing to be members of His family, are bound, therefore, from this day if never before, to "walk as He walked." What blessings will it bring upon your own hearts, to do this more diligently and devoutly than ever!

But besides this, let me remind you, if you have any zeal for your Master's honour, any charity for your perishing fellow-sinners, if you wish your families and households to be blessed with you, that it is by this method above all others, you can promote their welfare and His honour. I believe there is nothing in this world, that God so much blesses to the conversion of sinners, nothing He so blesses to save perishing souls, and to multiply the numbers of those who are the true followers of Jesus Christ, as this consistent imitation of Him on the part of His own people. Our faults scandalise the world; our defects repel sinners; they will see what we are, rather than listen to what we say, and if our conduct dishonours Him, they will still fold round them all the dark mantle of their unbelief, and never come to the Sun of righteousness. But if they see you, as Christians, "walking as He walked," then although sometimes offending them by the fixedness of principles that will never bend, and the plain unfolding of truths at first unpalatable, yet a consistent example, seen in universal gentleness, truth, tenderness and inte-

grity, will and must win its way to their hearts; and those who thus live, are centres of usefulness, round which many a poor wanderer from God and wisdom and happiness, is attracted to come and "taste and see that the Lord is good." Hence let those, who have this day together received that bread and wine as the memorials of Christ's love, to declare they welcomed Him in their hearts, for the sake of all around them, go from this house of prayer to-night, with this resolution, looking up to God Almighty by His Spirit, to enable them to keep it—"I will walk as Christ walked; in fulfilling

duty, in conquering trial, in bearing affronts, in kindness to my brethren, in ministering to the welfare of others, I will endeavour to walk as Christ walked.'

May He give to each of us the grace thus to follow Him; and in so doing, prepare us to pass the remainder of our lives with far more of Christian joy, than we ever yet attained; and then, when the hour comes—the good hour, that terminates our warfare, and shall throw open to us the portals of glory, we may enter, not with fear or regret, but with triumphant confidence.

DEALING DECEITFULLY WITH GOD.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. GEORGE WEIGHT, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
FEBRUARY 9, 1845.

On behalf of the Southwark Female Society, for relief of sickness and extreme want.

"But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth; and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing."—Malachi i. 14.

THE last of a long and glorious line of prophets, which God, age after age, had raised up as the witnesses of His truth to His most guilty and most rebellious people. Malachi's lot was cast in lamentably mournful and evil times: in times when his nation was nearly ruined, politically and morally; when the lamp in Zion's temple emitted a very feeble light, the unequal flickering of which was prophetic of early and utter extinction; when the hallowed fire on God's altar was no longer fed with the reverend and sleepless vigilance, which had formerly distinguished the attendant priests and ministers; and when "the burden of the Word of the Lord" pressed with almost insupportable weight, upon the few devoted servants, who were designated to sustain and convey it.

Man, in every age and in every nation, if he remain unsanctified, however he may be blessed and chastised, will still be a flagrant rebel against his God. This is true with respect to individuals; it is also true with respect to nations. If the most unwearied forbearance, if the most astonishing mercies, if the most affecting providences, if

the most palpable and marvellous miracles, could in themselves, and by their own virtue and influence, have won over any people to become "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," then indeed ought Israel to have been, in the very highest degree attainable by our fallen humanity, "a kingdom of priests, a special people to the Lord," a hallowed example to all nations, a most decided, most unequivocal and most uncompromising witness against all iniquity; a sacred community, whose angelic sanctity of heart, and whose spotless purity of life, should have "shown forth the praises of Him, who had called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." Such was far from being the state of the Jews, in the days of this last prophet of the Lord. He, like Elijah, seemed to be in a condition to say, "I only am left." Priests and people, those who brought the sacrifice and those who offered it, or pretended to offer it, were alike ungrateful, insensible and utterly depraved. Of the service of the God of their fathers they said, "Behold, what a weariness it is!" And when they did so far submit to Divine appoint-

ments, as to bring an oblation to the altar, that oblation was one most easily obtained, "without money and without price." It was "the blind, the torn, the lame, the sick;" it was that for which they could find no other use; it was that which in the market-place would bring no credit, and yield no profit.

Oh! man's greatest, man's direst, man's most fatal enemy is himself; for "he who sinneth against God," doeth the heaviest "wrong to his own soul." And so it was with the Jews. Iniquity on their part called forth on the part of God, even the God of all long-suffering, the fearful malediction in the text: "cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing."

This is an awful anathema; but let us not suppose, that the curse was more than equal to the transgression, or that the woe denounced transcended the heavy wrong committed. It was not so. For that law, which made large allowance for the guilt of an ignorant offender, made none for that of a wilful and deliberate transgressor. Now in the case before us, the crime was a wilful one. The curse is uttered against "the deceiver:" "cursed be the deceiver," that is to say, the hypocrite. He deliberately utters his "vow;" he "has in his flock a male," that is to say, the best and the most valuable of the flock; this he engages to dedicate to God; but instead of this, he brings "a corrupt thing," a thing without use in the family, and without value in the shop. The sinner so acting was left without excuse. He could not plead ignorance; for every Jew full well was aware, that God required his sacrifices to be without blemish and without spot. He full well knew, that in the best and purest times of his own national history, no worshipper would have been guilty of such daring temerity, as to bring to the officiating priest the blind, the lame, the torn and the sick, to be presented in sacrifice to the heart-searching God. And as he could not plead ignorance, so neither could he plead indigence. He "had in his flock a male," and that male he vowed to offer. It was in his power to offer it; for he had it. Yet he brought to the Lord, in its place, a worthless and corrupt thing. We cannot wonder, then, that such portentous effrontery called down upon the transgressor's head the thunderbolts of the Divine indignation.

But why was the vow, deliberately made, thus deliberately broken? Why?—because the deceiver loved a cheap and easy religion; he thought that any thing, the poorest, the meanest, the most refuse, the most worthless, was good enough to be dedicated to the service of God. Why?—because he loved a religion, enjoining no sacrifice, involving no self-denial, telling of no cross, and promulgating no command to "cut off the right hand, and to pluck out the right eye." He did present an offering; but it was of that which cost him nothing. It was the homage of the lip; it was the service of the voice; and it was that alone. This deceiver was like that fig tree, which the Saviour cursed; he was green with respect to the leaves of a religious profession—he was barren with respect to the fruit of a holy and devoted heart. There was the appearance of vitality; but there was corruption and death at the core.

"Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing."

Now, brethren, the question is—how are we to avoid this curse? For what was a dangerous thing in the times of Malacbi, is a dangerous thing now; and the service and homage of the heart are as acceptable to God now, as they were in the days of the prophet. Let us consider this.

1. We see that the curse is denounced on the insincerity of the man, who pledged himself to give to God the best of his flock, and who nevertheless dared to offer him the worst, that is, the torn, the lame, the blind, the sick. Now this most plainly, most emphatically teaches us, that God requires sincerity of heart; that is to say, God requires, that men should really and truly feel and mean what they profess, and what they say. He requires, that they should be earnest, in "striving to enter in at the strait gate," through which all must pass, and in treading that narrow road, along which all must travel, who would enter into life eternal.

The Levitical economy abounds with the most particular, the most minute instructions, respecting the care, the consideration, the jealous scrupulosity, with which the service of God was to be attended; and surely these minute instructions give to us intimations, far enough from being unintelligible, of the manner in which He is to be worshipped, who requires us to "worship Him in spirit and

in truth." The animal to be offered was to be without spot or blemish; the officiating priest, ere he offered it, was to wash himself and bathe his clothes; certain parts of the animal to be immolated were previously to be purified by water. And these searching requirements extended not only to animal life, but to things destitute of animal life. Thus, for example, if in the service of God oil were used, it was required to be of the *purest* kind; and if flour were employed, it was required to be of the *finest* possible quality. But if we are doubtful respecting the *types* of Scripture, we cannot refuse to pay homage to the *texts* of Scripture; and these are too plain, simple and explicit, to allow the least shadow of a shade of subterfuge to any "deceiver, who hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and then sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing." Yes, dearest brethren, it requires no genius, it requires no penetration, it requires no critical acumen, to understand and apprehend language like this: "My son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways:" "take diligent heed to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul;" "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." He who thus devotes himself to the Lord, is not included in the category of those denounced in the text as "deceivers, who vow, and then sacrifice to the Lord a corrupt thing." O sirs! if you would beware of incurring the "anathema maranatha," which seems to hang over many, who profess religion now, beware of the atrocious guilt of reserving; beware of vowing to God the best, and then giving to God the worst; beware of dealing deceitfully with God; beware of that heavy and fearful malediction—"cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully." Possibly, it may be, that the most fiery region of all the departments of hell is reserved for him, that "voweth unto the Lord, and then sacrificeth to Him a corrupt thing." What is this, but to do as Judas did, who kissed the Saviour, and then betrayed Him?

2. The earlier this sincerity of heart towards God is developed, the better it will be for us, and the more honourable and acceptable to God.

Let us again refer to the lessons, which we may find in the sacrificial institutions of the Old Testament on this subject. God, as you are aware, not only required that the male of the flock or of the herd should be offered to Him, but that this male should be presented in all its beauty, its freshness, its vigour, its purity. We often find, that a "lamb of the first year" is particularly specified among the *mactations*, to be laid upon the Divine altar. It is reasonable to suppose that this selection was made, because a lamb of the first year was considered the best. Thus we find again and again commands like these specified: "two young bullocks, and seven lambs of the first year, without spot." And these minute instructions extended, as I said before, even to things destitute of life; thus God says—"If thou offer a meat-offering of thy first-fruits, thou shalt offer green ears of corn." This supposition appears to be confirmed by the fact, that Abel offered "of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof." What is the fat of the flock? No doubt, the meaning of Moses is, that Abel offered unto God the firstlings of the flock, and the best of the flock: "the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof," the fat of the flock, namely; that is to say, the best of the flock; and it was manifest assuredly to the pious mind of Abel, that he ought to select for God's service the youngest, the best, the most precious of all that he possessed. Of those who could bring no more costly offering, it was required in the very same spirit, that they should present "a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons;" not simply pigeons, but two *young* pigeons. And this specification seems to pervade the whole of that remarkable and prophetic economy.

We see this truth developed in various parts of the early books of the Old Testament. For example, all the first-born of mankind, and all the firstlings of cattle, were considered as the especial property of God. Thus He speaks: "All the first-born are Mine; for on the day that I smote all the first-born of the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto Me all the first-born in Israel, both man and beast; Mine they shall be: I am the Lord." And completely in agreement with the spirit of this institution, does the Scripture say—"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with *the first-fruits* of all thine increase."

Now all this, dear brethren, without any forced and unnatural straining of the language of the Holy Scriptures, ought certainly to remind our youthful hearers, of the high and paramount importance of devoting the earliest part of their lives to the service of the Lord. When you read, that "the first-born are the Lord's," the first-born of man, and the firstlings of the flock; when you read, that the youngest, the most precious, the most valuable of all things, are to be dedicated to God's service; what is it but to say in another form what Solomon presses upon you—"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." What is it, but that which the prophet Isaiah says—"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near?" Dear young people, let me press this on you; and oh! how many of "the firstlings of the flock" are here to-night! Is it, I would ask you, too early for you to render unto God your bodies and souls, as "a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, which is your reasonable service?" Is it too early for you to "cast off the works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light?" Is it too early for you to say, "My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth?" Is it too early for you to strive, by the assistance of the blessed Spirit of God, to resemble those holy youths, whose precious memories are embalmed in Scripture—Timothy, Josiah, Obadiah, Samuel, and others? Is it too early for you to "flee youthful lusts, and to follow righteousness?" Oh! no; come now, without hesitation and without delay, and offer upon the Lord's altar the male of the flock. Come and bring to the Lord's altar "the firstlings of the flock and the fat thereof." Come now, and dedicate to Him the vigour of your body, the energies of your mind, and all your means and opportunities of usefulness.

3. We have already seen, that God requires sincerity of heart in His service, and that such sincerity should be evinced at the earliest possible period; the text further teaches us, that this sincerity should be maintained, in all its purity and integrity, throughout the whole of human life.

The offering of one unexceptionable sacrifice did not exempt the worshippers, of old, from any future duty of the kind.

No; the personal devotion and the personal oblation were to be continued, in all their vigour and their sincerity, as long as life remained. Religion—obedience to God—is not a solitary and insulated act; it is a habit. It is a habit begun in regeneration, and advancing in its purity, its power and its heavenliness, until it blends and is merged in the glories of eternity.

We may suppose, that it was sometimes trying, for the pious Jewish worshipper, whose flocks and herds were small, whose family was numerous, and whose wants were pressing, to appropriate the best of the flock and of the herd to the service of his God. Yet such was his duty; and such is our duty. Religion has its difficulties, as well as its pleasures; but the difficulties arise, not from religion, but from the perverseness of our own nature; and that perverseness it is the very object of religion to counteract, to weaken and finally to destroy. It is, in truth, that very "corrupt thing," against which the children of God have to wage a perpetual warfare. Oh! brethren, we must give to the Lord the best of the flock, at whatever sacrifice that gift is laid upon His altar. When we consider the selfishness, the utter depravity of our fallen nature, we surely need not wonder, that a life of constant obedience should be a life of constant self-denial; and it is so; but the best of the flock, the best of the herd, must be given to the Lord, cost what it may. It must be given at once. It must be given always. Oh! not without meaning does the Scripture speak of a "work of faith, a labour of love, and a patience of hope." Not without meaning does the Scripture tell us, that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life; and few there be, that find it." Not without meaning does it tell us, that we are to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God, that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Now, dear brethren, look at two affecting and most memorable examples in Scripture, of the heavy curse of God falling on two deceivers, whose characters are most instantly delineated in the text; who vowed unto the Lord a male, who had that male to offer, and who yet presented "a corrupt thing."

Look, in the Old Testament, at the case of Saul, the king of Israel, with respect to Agag, the king of Amalek. The Lord gave Saul commandment to "go and

utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and all that they had." He went; and he did destroy them, but he reserved the best of the flock, which he ought to have slain; and kept it, not for the Lord, but for himself. "Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly." Oh! what an exemplification of the utter bankruptcy of human nature—of the utter depravity of man! Men will give up much, when the conscience is smitten, when the heart is affected, when the soul is tried and terrified; they will give up the refuse of the flock, they will give up that which is vile and worthless; but they will keep back the darling sin—they will not slay "the best of the sheep and of the oxen." There is a reservation; and the reservation is in favour of that which the heart loves and approves. So it was with Saul. And yet this most consummate and foul deceiver, when he met Samuel said to him—"Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the Lord." Oh! if his conscience yet possessed one grain of sensibility, if his heart were yet pervious to impression, what must Saul have felt, when the calm and dignified servant of the Lord replied, "What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"—how comes it, that this falleth on mine ear, if thou hast utterly destroyed all the cattle of Amalek? Saul said, they had been reserved as a sacrifice to the Lord; and then Samuel exclaimed—"Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king."

The New Testament furnishes a lamentable example, parallel to the one now adduced. It must be familiar to you all: the well known case of Ananias and Sapphira. It was then the custom of the converts to Christianity, to bring to the feet of the apostles the produce of their property, sold for the common good; these early Christians "sold their possessions

and goods, and brought the prices, and laid them down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Ananias and Sapphira professed to do this—to sell all their property, and bring the money to the apostles, and dedicate it to the Lord's service. And they did sell their property; but instead of bringing the whole, as they professed to do, they "kept back part of the price." There was a reservation. They professed to give up the whole; they only gave up a portion. They vowed to the Lord the male of the flock; but they sacrificed "a corrupt thing." Now see how the "anathema maranatha" fell upon them. Ananias was smitten down in a moment by the outstretched arm of the Lord, and was carried out to burial. And when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in, and the apostle asked her, "Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much?"—and she said, Yea, for so much;" then the apostle said, "How is it, that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband, are at the door, and shall carry thee out;" and she also gave up the ghost.

Brethren, I pray you, let these two scriptural facts teach you, that it is an awful thing to try to deal deceitfully with God. Let them teach you, that "it is a fearful thing, to fall into the hands of the living God." Let them teach you, that he indeed is accused, "who hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and then sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing." The celebrated Dr. South, in language extremely vigorous, says—"Men are damned for being fools."

4. All our approaches to God, all our acts of homage, all our sacrifices, all our prayers and praises, are to be made and offered through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The only means, by which guilty and bankrupt man can appear before the infinitely holy God, so as to find acceptance in His sight, is by that "new and living way," which Christ incarnate has opened for us, through the rent veil of His crucified humanity. The pious Jew, who "had in his flock a male," and who vowed, and offered it to the Lord, was not accepted merely from the fact, that his oblation was without spot and without blemish. No; more—much more than this—was indispensably requisite; and that indispensably requisite thing

was faith—faith in the one great, future, and only efficient sacrifice. Without this faith, the individual holocaust, the noblest hecatomb, and even the oblation of “the cattle upon a thousand hills,” would have been utterly unavailing in the sight of God. And it is only by laying the hand of our faith upon the Lamb of God that was slain, that we can “have boldness to enter into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus.” Christ crucified, and Christ crucified alone, is the sinner’s plea. Christ “is the way;” Christ “is the truth;” Christ “is the life.” Without faith in Him “it is impossible for us to please God;” and “by Him all that believe are justified freely from all things.”

We can offer to God the Father no sacrifice, that can ever find acceptance in His sight, unless it be presented through Christ, as the great High Priest of our most holy profession. We need not go far for illustrations and evidences of all this. In St. Paul’s epistle to the Hebrews, in the eleventh chapter, we see at once why “the firstlings of the flock,” why, “the fat” of the flock, presented by Abel, were pronounced so “excellent;” we see why Enoch “was translated, that he should not see death;” we see why Noah, anticipating things unseen, and yet far distant, “prepared an ark for the saving of his house;” we see why “Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac, and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten son;” we see why Moses “chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.” It was simply, that all these servants of God acted, and were influenced, by faith in the promised and future Messiah. It was by faith in Christ, whom in the fulness of time God sent forth to be a propitiation. Oh! let all this teach us the solemn truth, that however active and vigorous we may be in our duties, however liberal we may be in our charities, however splendid and costly in our oblations, all will be without value—all will be without acceptance, if there be not a vital faith in the only Mediator between God and man.

5. And now, dear brethren, let us bring this matter a little more closely home to ourselves. Let us not be as the man mentioned by St. James, who “beholdeth his natural face in a glass, and goeth his way, and straitway forgetteth what

manner of man he was.” It is easy to speak of sincerity; it is easy to profess sincerity; God’s Holy Spirit alone can make us feel it. It is the gift of God; and one great work of the Holy Ghost in the heart of man is to make him a man of meaning—is to make him a man of sincerity—is to make him feel his utter unworthiness in the sight of God, and give him grace to build his everlasting hopes upon the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us, then, deal honestly, and practically, and searchingly, with ourselves; and let us endeavour to ascertain, whether it be the habit of our lives to give unto the Lord the best of the flock—to dedicate to the Lord’s service our body, our soul and our spirit, as “a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Let this great verity be written on the fleshly tables of our hearts—“Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” We are not our own; God has not sent us into this world, to live merely for ourselves; He has sent us for far higher purposes than this. He has sent us for nobler purposes, than merely to study and to serve ourselves, our families and our connexions. We are to be God’s husbandmen; our work is to scatter the seeds of immortality, throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Do we ask what is our field of labour? The answer is ready: “the field is the world.” We are God’s stewards; He has put His gifts into our hands, and He expects that the objects of our sympathy, compassion and care, shall be the poor and the needy of every nation, of every colour, and of every language. We are God’s servants; and as such, the command is, that “whatsoever our hand findeth to do,” whether it be for the soul or body, whether it be for time or eternity, whether it be for ourselves or for others, we are to do it at once, and to “do it with our might.” Nor are we to be satisfied with doing as much as men in general are willing to perform. No, brethren; we are to gauge and test our piety, not by the maxims of society, not by the customs of the world, but by the laws and example of Christ. We are to be influenced by the noblest of all principles; we are to be stimulated by the purest of all zeal; we are to be actuated by the most expansive of all charity; we are to be distinguished by the most extensive

of all benevolence. We believe that our *principles* are pure; oh! let us take care, that our *conduct* may be equally pure. Let us—for that is the substance of the law of Christ—let us strive, let us pray, that “the mind that was in Christ, may be in us.”

You will see, that it is not at all difficult, to connect what I have been saying, with the purpose which has brought me up here this evening.

I have looked forward to this evening's service with some anxiety, and with more pleasure. The anxiety you may easily suppose to have been simply of this kind: that it would be extremely difficult to say any thing sufficiently powerful and sufficiently impressive, to be at all worthy of an object so blessed as the object to be advocated to-night. And yet, deeply feeling and deeply deploring that utter inadequacy, it would be worthy of heavy censure, if I could forget, or seem to forget, how often it has been my privilege from this pulpit, as you know, to advocate the cause of the poor and the needy, the fatherless and the widow. Never yet have I pleaded in vain for those who cannot plead for themselves; never yet have you let me call upon you to pity the outcast and them that are ready to perish, without responding to the call. And I do not expect that you will do so now. I know you will not. Often has the anticipation of the service in which we are now engaged, fallen upon my mind; often have I thought of what I had to do, and what I am doing at this moment; and seldom have I thought of it without feeling much concern—without asking myself the very natural question, how it would be possible to adduce any thing fresh, any thing new, any thing stimulating, any plea, any argument, any motive, which I had not again and again suggested to your consideration. But perhaps the anxiety was a mistaken one, after all; for certainly there are few who know, better than him who was once the Curate of this Church, how readily on all adequate occasions “the riches of your liberality” have abounded; and I regard the present as eminently an adequate occasion. I shall therefore at once proceed to show to those of you, who have not yet learned the fact, (though I suppose the number of such must be exceedingly small,) what is the real character, and what the claims and proceedings

of the Southwark Female Society.

This Society I may well call a sisterhood of the purest benevolence, and of the most diffusive charity. It was established in the year 1813; it has therefore been in existence thirty-two years; and during that period it has visited and relieved 45,408 cases of want, distress, suffering and misery. I have been told, since I came into the Church to-night, that during one single month, which has just closed, this Society relieved 400 cases of distress, distributing among them £200.

A dear and esteemed friend of mine, in extensive practice in this neighbourhood as a physician, has kindly written out one or two cases, for me to read to you this evening; pledging himself to the accuracy of the communication he makes. He says in his letter—“I send you two or three cases; they may be relied upon; all have occurred in the practice of our Lying-in Charity. Thirteen years of pretty active experience among the poor and the distressed of this district, have convinced me of the immeasurable benefits bestowed upon the poor, through the agency of the Southwark Female Society. The Visitors of this Charity may indeed be said to dive into the depths of dungeons, to plunge into the infections of hospitals, to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain, to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression and contempt, to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, to compare and collate the distresses of all.”

There is, with respect to the ladies who are Visitors of this Society, very much more of toil, and care, and pain, and self-denial, and risk, than many of you would on the first blush of the matter be prepared to expect. Look for a moment at the facts. The Society is conducted by ladies. They, in common with their friends and neighbours, subscribe (and liberally) to the funds of the Society; but in addition to that, they conduct all its affairs; and I need not tell men of business, acquainted with the routine of life, that to do this with delicacy, with prudence and with accuracy, involves a great deal more trouble, than those who know nothing of such matters, would ever be likely to suppose. But these ladies, also, themselves visit and relieve the cases of sorrow, pain, wretchedness and misery, brought under their notice. Perhaps you may think it is a very small matter, for them to go into the sick rooms, and the

miserable cellars, and deal out the bounty placed in their hands; but if you think so, you little know what Southwark is; you little know the wretchedness, which ministers and Visitors in Southwark sometimes see; you little know the dirt, the filth, the noisomeness, the things not to be mentioned, to which they are constantly exposed. These ladies, remember, are themselves, many of them, wives and mothers; they have their own families to care for; and yet you find them where fever rages, where infectious diseases are dominant, beside the bed of misery, daring the contagion, that they may, in the beautiful language of Scripture, "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." There are many of you, who would shrink from the sights they witness; though, if you have not been accustomed to see the miseries of some of your poor fellow-creatures, the sight would be a most impressive lesson to you. But more than this: those ladies go into the rooms and cellars, where the poor sufferers are found groaning under various and dire diseases, and they give that which you entrust to their care; but there are sights of woe, there are sounds of sorrow, that meet their eyes and ears, which would elicit far more than they as agents of the Society are empowered to give, and in many, many cases, having given all that they can from the Society, they open their own purses and give much more—give what they never anticipated when they took upon themselves the blessed and heavenly office. We need not wonder at this. It is one thing, to hear of misery, or read of it at a distance; it is another thing to stand by the couch of the sufferer, and see it—see what that sufferer needs, be able to afford it, and yet hold it back. Such is not *their* conduct. But they do more than this; and I take it to be one of the crowning excellencies of the Southwark Female Society. They do relieve the poor and the needy, they do minister to the wants of the sufferer; but they do not leave them then. No; they have to tell of Him, who said—"Leave Thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let Thy widows trust in Me." They have to tell of Him, who says—"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." When they have ministered to the earthly and physical wants of the poor creatures whom they visit, they point the dying eye to the Lamb of God; they tell of Christ cruci-

fied; they repeat the blessed assurances, that fall like precious balsam on the sinner's ear—"Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely"—"He is able to save to the uttermost," the uttermost of man's time, the uttermost of man's guilt, the uttermost of man's despair, "them that come unto God by Him." Who of us, knowing what they are and what they do, would not pray—The Lord bless them with prosperity! the Lord give unto them the blessings of peace!

But now for one or two cases.

"Husband, wife, and four children, in great distress; the husband out of employment for months; every article of clothing and furniture pledged; the last article pledged for threepence, spent in potatoes for the children; the husband and wife without food for three days; the woman confined from Guy's Hospital Lying-in Charity. This case, relieved by the Southwark Female Society, and by the Ladies of that Society, who visited it." One is tempted to ask you to look that case, related in few words, fairly in the face; as I came up to London, I was thinking of it, till I could have wept over it. The husband anxious for work, and unable to obtain it; the wife, if she could obtain it, not able to do it, and looking forward to the delicate, trying, perilous time, when she shall become—we can hardly say a *joyful* mother. And knowing something of what she has to pass through, she is anxious to lay by two or three little things, to make some slight preparation for that interesting, affecting season; but ah! the wants of the day drive away all thought of the morrow; the morrow must "take thought for the things of itself." One article after another goes, and at last there is but one left; and she looks at her husband—you see the tears starting to the eyes of both—"What can we do now? even that must go." There are the children; how sunken are their eyes! how anxious their looks! how urgent their entreaties for food! The husband leaves the house; he obtains threepence for the last article that can be pledged; it is expended in potatoes; and he brings them home. I can imagine how the children look for his entering the room with them. They are prepared; they are soon devoured. The poor wife, in her delicate condition, needing food, and comfort, and support, has none; she and the husband have been schooled in sorrow and suffering, and they have

learned the hard and bitter lesson of self-denial, which the children have yet to learn. The children are fed; and for three days the husband and wife taste not one single thing. And now imagine a tapping at the door; a stranger enters—a lady; and she comes with the relief they want. She gives them comfort too; and she tells them of a merciful and gracious God. Can you wonder, that they look upon her as a messenger from heaven? Can you wonder that she, as she leaves the cellar or the room, the tears starting to her eyes, says to herself—"It is indeed more blessed to *give* than to *receive*."

The second case is that of a Mrs. T. "The husband left his home six weeks before her confinement, in a fit of derangement. During her illness, two of her children died; one of them was buried at the private expence of the ladies, who are Visitors of the Southwark Female Society. With the assistance of this Society she was saved; without that assistance she would have been lost. Her means of support, for herself and seven children, was needle-work." Probably, often unable to get it to do; and more probably, when able to get it, not fit in her condition to do it.

The third case is that of a Mrs. A, a widow with five children. "At the commencement of this very month, she was receiving the aid of the Southwark Female Society; and that Society has solely prevented this poor woman from going, with her children, into the Union work-house. Almost every article of furniture she possessed, has been pledged, to enable her to purchase a mangle; and this virtuous woman (let it be mentioned to her honour,) pays fourpence a week for the instruction of two of her children, announcing it as her determination to live upon one meal a day, rather than her children should be brought up in ignorance and vice." Is this a case, that you would leave to perish? No; you will appreciate such nobleness of mind, and render to this woman the need of approbation, and contribute to the aid of such as these; and many such cases are within the wide range of this great Charity.

The fourth case is that of Mrs. F, who lived, and perhaps at this moment is still living, within three minutes' walk of this very Church, in a district—the Mint—well known to some of you perhaps, and certainly to him who is now addressing

you; for in bygone days many an hour have I passed in the rooms and cellars of the Mint—hours, I hope and trust, spent usefully and profitably, in telling of Him who came into the world to seek and to save the lost. This poor woman was taken ill with fever; during the course of this disease, she was prematurely confined. My excellent friend says—"When I visited her, she was lying on a damp floor, and her only bed was an old sack stuffed with shavings. Friends got her a bedstead and a bed; she was placed on the books of this Society, and under the care of gentlemen connected with Guy's Hospital," one of the glories of England, "and through God's blessing she was restored to health."

My friend tells me—"If it were necessary, I could fill a quire of paper with short notes of cases, which have occurred within my own knowledge; and most sincerely do I believe, that there is no institution, which allots its means with more discretion, or does more good, than this useful and benevolent Society."

These, brethren, are the facts, that I came up to London to lay before you to-night. I do not intend to weaken any impression, which the detail of them has made upon your minds. What I ask you to do is this: to think of the misery, of which I have been speaking, and then as you pass the plates, to follow the genuine and honest dictates of your own hearts. If I could take you from this Church, I could place you in five minutes, where with your very eyes and ears you would see and hear what I have been describing; in five minutes you might be in the dark cellars and wretched garrets of the Mint, and you would see sights and hear sounds of horror, that would, if your hearts are made of flesh, (as they are,) affect you more deeply, and touchingly and permanently, than the most powerful sermon you ever heard. But I pray you to recollect what I have been saying, and to carry out the recollection into practice. All that I would say further is, in the language of Scripture—"Blessed is the man that provideth for the poor and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble." Oh! that God's Holy Spirit may give you to feel such compassion for the poor and needy, that that blessedness, in all its amplitude and extent, may be yours for evermore!

NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. THOMAS DALE, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. BRIDE'S CHURCH, FLEET STREET, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
FEBRUARY 16, 1845.

On behalf of the Western City Dispensary.

"There is no respect of persons with God."—Romans ii. 11.

EVEN those works of God, with which we seem the most familiar, are replete with mystery. "Who hath entered into the springs of the sea? or who hath walked in the search of the depth? Whereupon are the foundations of the earth fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof? Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof? By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?" These, and many such as these, are questions asked by God himself; and which of us can answer them, when Job to whom they were addressed, laid his hand upon his mouth, acknowledged his own ignorance, abhorred his presumption, and "repented in dust and ashes?"

While, if this be true of the natural world, which the hand of God fashioned, how much more is it true of the moral world, which the mind of God administers and directs. There also, we discern around us, in every direction, mysteries; apparent moral inconsistencies and contradictions. We see, for example,—I have seen—every one of you has seen—virtue prostrated with calamity, piety arrayed in rags, while ungodliness "prospereth in the world," is increased with riches, "clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day." And yet, in the teeth of all this, we are told, not by the text alone, but by many parts of Scripture, that "there is no respect of persons with God;" that there is no preference or partiality in the Infinite Mind, towards any class or order of His creatures; that He hath "made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on the face of the whole earth," and that "in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is alike accepted of Him."

How, then, it may be asked, and asked especially by those who feel the pressure of straitened circumstances, and the humiliation of low estate—how are we to reconcile what we see, and what we feel, with what we read in Holy Writ? Simply, I answer, by looking to the main end and object of man's being; by estimating present circumstances, according as they relate to the great concern of acceptance with God; and by observing how apparent respect of persons here, is connected with, and conducive to the final development or demonstration of the saying, that in very deed "there is no respect of persons with God."

In order, however, to a complete view of the subject, I shall separate it into two parts; and first, I shall assign the reasons why there is apparently "respect of persons" here—I say apparently, for it is not really so; and I shall afford the proof, secondly, that there shall be "no respect of persons" hereafter.

I. Now it is popularly, but very mistakenly assumed, that difference of outward circumstances and condition among men, is an evidence of "respect of person" with God; because we are in every instance what He has made us, and we have in every instance what He has given us; and He hath given to some pre-eminence over others in personal endowments, in intellectual capacities, in the abundance of worldly possessions, and in honour and estimation among mankind.

For this, however, we may assign the following reasons: that such has been the order of nature, throughout all God's works, from the beginning; that inequality among individuals conduces to the general good; and lastly, and chiefly, that the temporal condition, whether it

be of abundance, of sufficiency, or of destitution, is best adapted to "the trial of our faith," and best suited to the discipline and culture of the soul for immortality.

Not only has it been the order of nature, from the date of creation itself, that there should be degrees of beauty in the vegetable, and of strength in the animal world; that trees, for example, should be of different height, flowers of different hues, and fruits of different flavour, and that the irrational creatures should vary in the measure of that instinct, which supplies the place of reason; but the same wise Creator ordained a difference also in the first living pair of rational and immortal beings, whom He was pleased to form in His own image, and in His own likeness. "In the beginning" of creation, we are told, "God made them male and female;" and however, in the perfection of Paradise, the superior beauty of the one might counterbalance the superior strength of the other, there was yet a latent inferiority in the female, which temptation developed and drew out. Accordingly, from the first fatal act of disobedience, the woman was placed in subjection to her husband. But does any one, or could any one, imagine for an instant, that the soul of woman became on that account more widely estranged from the original likeness of Deity, and less precious in the sight of the common Creator? Scripture implies directly the reverse. After the fatal act, which was the first of all our sins, and the cause of all our sufferings, both man and woman are represented as alike made conscious of their nakedness; both are clad by the Divine hand in the very same apparel; both are involved in one bitter punishment; and both are cheered alike by the promise of one Redeemer. Nay, if there be any difference, the woman, the "weaker vessel," would appear to be the more highly honoured of the two; for it is the seed of the woman, which was to "bruise the serpent's head." If, indeed, the one had stood while the other fell; if, instead of receiving the forbidden fruit from the hand of the temptress, Adam had resolutely refused to transgress his Maker's sole command; there would have been a wide, and, it may be, an eternal difference, analogous to that which shall take place at the final judgment, when the wicked shall be severed from the just, and consigned to a separate abode through-

out eternity. But it was not so; both were alike involved in the common transgression, and both are alike capable of realising the proper deliverance. Hence says St. Paul—"There is no difference between Jew and Greek, bond and free, male and female, for all are one in Christ Jesus." And in saying this, he did but express, under another form, the declaration of his Master, that "in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Thus far, then, though the woman is made subject to the man, and not the man to the woman, "there is no respect of persons with God."

But a second reason for diversity of condition will be found in the fact, that inequality among individuals conduces to the general good. And this connects itself with the former; arising out of the order of nature, which has obtained, not only throughout the vegetable and animal world, but throughout all degrees of rational created being from the beginning, angels not excepted; for of angels there are orders and gradations. There was a time indeed, within the memory of some here present, when men were found to raise the absurd and senseless cry of universal equality; forgetting that such a state of things could not possibly exist, unless all mankind were exactly equal in strength, exactly equal in talent, actuated by the very same propensities, and in pursuit of the same objects. Even among children, who certainly are the fairest selection for an experiment of the kind, no sooner does intellect begin to dawn, than the endeavour after superiority, and the attainment of it too, become distinctly perceptible; much more, then, when a number of persons are brought together into one community or social frame, will one or another acquire ascendancy, to which the rest, willing or unwilling, will have no resource but to submit. If, for example, only two individuals were exposed at the same time to imminent danger, from which the one was glad instantly to fly, while the other boldly faced and triumphantly mastered it, could any notion of theoretical equality prevent the one from looking up thenceforward, with a consciousness of inferiority, to his more vigorous or more intrepid companion. So long as there are some formed by natural endowments to lead, and others to follow, so long must there be some to ex-

ercise command, and others to render obedience; nor has any community been discovered, in any age or in any part of the world, wherein such distinctions did not exist. Even those who, impatient of the salutary restraint of law, have fled from society, that they might bid defiance to its dictates, or seek the evasion of its penalties—even these have always, when banding together for mutual protection, found themselves compelled to enact laws, and to elect a leader; and not unfrequently—such is the inconsistency of man—do outlaws submit, as in the case of the bandit and the pirate, to a species of tyranny incomparably more oppressive than that from which they sought to fly.

All this, then, tends to prove, at least if men will use their understanding, that in causing one to be born in a state which confers authority, and another in a state which entails obedience, “there is no respect of persons with God.” He elevates the one, or depresses the other, without any merit or demerit of their own; and could we weigh in an even balance the advantages of either state, we should find it very difficult to determine on which side the scale preponderates. Of course, those who are in an inferior station, may imagine the advantage to be on the side of those above them; and this is only natural; they do not, however,—for they cannot,—appreciate the increased anxiety, which is felt by the objects of their admiration or their envy; nor can they believe, that the highest in rank often sacrifice more of personal enjoyment, for the good of others, than they realise by their pre-eminence, of individual gratification for themselves. I think, however, that I can illustrate this, strange as it may seem, to the comprehension of every one in this congregation, who has ever read his Bible. I should suppose, that any who examine the history of David, would certainly conclude, that the innocent youth, keeping his father's sheep in the wilderness, with not a single enemy upon earth, and with God for his friend in heaven, was assuredly not less happy than David, king of Israel, dwelling in a house of cedar and seated on a royal throne, but at the same time with adversaries conspiring his downfall, and his own children turning parricidal hand against his life. And to take another instance from the Bible: what was the result of the attain-

ment of royal dignity to Saul? Was not his crown a crown of thorns? and though his career began in victory, did it not terminate in disgrace, discomfiture and death? How, then, can God be said to be any “respector of persons,” although He caused Saul to become a king, and for that purpose deprived His own faithful servant Samuel of the office he had hitherto sustained, of the judge of Israel? The nation, indeed, required one to lead them against the Philistines; and for their sake, but not for his own, was Saul exalted out of the people; but for his own sin, not for theirs, were the weapons of his warfare broken, “the shield of the mighty vilely cast away,” and “the daughters of the Philistines rejoiced, the daughters of the uncircumcised did triumph.”

But the third reason, which I have assigned for this apparent preference of some over others, though last in order, is primarily important; namely, that the worldly condition, whatever it be, is the trial of faith, and the probation for eternity, best suited to him who occupies it. Some are born, as it might seem, to do—others to suffer—the will of God; but if, on the one hand, action is more profitable to others, endurance is most assuredly not the least profitable to ourselves; and only towards that man could God be said to act with undue partiality, to whom He should altogether deny the power of doing His will, and the opportunity of attaining to the perfect bliss and consummation of the righteous. But God has done this to none. We are told, that He “would have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth;” while it is a principle of action, and of universal obligation, and of universal efficacy within the Church, that “as every man hath received the gift, even so should we minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God,” each “of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.” Whether, therefore, we are possessed of the one talent, or of the two, or of the ten, is comparatively of inferior moment; since a man is “accepted according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not.” The great Arbiter of our eternal destinies expects and demands from each of His servants a proportionate rate of increase; and he who is faithful in that

which man accounts least, is faithful also in that which is accounted much. Thus St. Paul "charges them that are rich in this world," "that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;" but even if they attain to this, which we may well fear to be comparatively a rare thing, it is not, to say the least, a higher degree of attainment—it does not, to say the least, manifest a more abundant measure of grace—than to suffer patiently the will of God, in the endurance of pain, or poverty, or unprovoked slander, or unmerited disgrace. Had the man, of whom we read in the Gospel that he was "clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day," given half his goods, like Zaccheus, to the poor, or like Barnabas, the son of consolation, converted his fields and his granaries into money, and laid the price of them at the Saviour's feet, we have no warrant whatever for supposing that this dedication would have been more acceptable, than the daily, hourly and patient self-devotion of the beggar Lazarus, who "lay at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table." Lazarus could not act, indeed, but he could suffer; he could not relieve the distress or destitution of others, but he could wait patiently the time of God's providence for the mitigation of his own. He could not display before men, in active social life, the moral influence of the law of God; but he could, and he did, exhibit before God a shining example of long-suffering and patience. And thus every one, whom the providence of God hath placed in a humble sphere of life, ought to consider whether that situation, of all that could be desired, is not the best calculated to advance his highest and most enduring interests; whether if God were to bestow upon him a large measure of worldly prosperity, his heart might not thereby become hardened, or his spiritual perceptions obscured; whether he might not "be of those that draw back unto perdition," instead of "those that believe unto the saving of the soul." Either the fact of an eternal existence must be disproved altogether, or else it must be taken to be the true test of the occupations, the pursuits and the interests of time. The man who is poorest in this world, would have indeed far more than an equivalent,

if he were thereby made, or thereby kept, "rich in faith, and heir of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him."

Hence, again, "there is no respect of persons with God," because He will judge all by what they have done, and by what they have suffered for Christ's sake; not by what they have enjoyed or possessed. "He that doeth wrong," says St. Paul, "shall receive for the wrong which he hath done," whether he be high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, for here "there is no respect of persons." "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" and all who believe "are justified freely by God's grace," through His mercy unto sinners in Christ Jesus.

II. Having thus assigned reasons for the apparent "respect of persons" here, so far as that term may be identified with diversity of condition and circumstance in the present life, I proceed now to afford the evidence, why there is really "no respect of persons with God," because there shall be none hereafter.

And this evidence is also threefold. First, because the distinctions to which men attach so much importance, are transient and precarious in their very nature; next, because, whatever men may possess, all are alike responsible to God; and lastly, because all who are the redeemed of the Lord, have a common Saviour, and must be partakers of a common salvation.

It will at once be admitted by all, that whatever difference there may be in the character of our path through life, there is none whatever in the nature of the end. One "house" is "appointed for all men living;" and no sooner do we enter that common tenement, than all are on the same level of corruption. The lifeless clay, whether it were once animated by the soul of prince or of peasant, is alike the banquet of the worm. And what is the undying soul? It is either rejoicing in God's manifested presence, as the purchase of the blood of Christ; or it is an eternal outcast from the mercies, the blessings and the glories of redemption. Such is the sole alternative presented to us by Holy Writ; and only by this can

we expect to discover, wherefore prosperity or adversity intermingled more largely with our own earthly lot; why the virtuous were left to pine through life in obscurity and indigence, and why the ungodly were permitted to attain high honours, to accumulate royal revenues, to live the idols of the multitude, and to reap in dying the evanescent immortality of fame. Then, if not before, it will be seen, that the fancied advantages which we tacitly associate with affluence, and on account of which we "call the proud happy," are far more than counterbalanced by the downward, depreciating, demoralising tendency of wealth; which was such as to wing from our Lord the emphatic declaration, that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

It may, indeed, cost an effort of mind, on the part of those of you who are daily struggling with privation, and who behold those that are nearest and dearest to them destitute of almost the necessities of life, to suppress the rising wish that they had been born to the opulence, which they see possessed, and, I must add, perverted, by so many around them; but never let them harbour for an instant the vain and wicked imagination, that it is because they are of less estimation in the sight of God. They ought to consider, that if they have not the advantages, neither have they the trials of the affluent, if they have not their means of doing good, neither have they their responsibilities for leaving good undone. Nay, they ought to consider, that the very necessity of daily toil for daily bread, is itself a preservative against sin, for sin and Satan are ever on the watch to intrude into the vacant mind; and though necessities and disappointments and distress may plant with thorns their path through the wilderness of this world, they at least diminish the attractions of things below, and point the soul to things above. While, even this transient difference diminishes as the span of life contracts; and riches, which they cannot retain, are actually not on a par with contented poverty, even in respect of present enjoyment. The "good part," as we shall see, is that "which cannot be taken away;" and while "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

But a second evidence that God "is no respecter of persons," will be found in the fact, that all, whatever they possess, are alike responsible to their Judge; and that possession is precarious, while responsibility is certain. "Every one of us," said St. Paul, "must give account of himself to God;" and the principle of that account is a principle of the strictest impartiality. To whom little is given, of him is little required, while "to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more," and so it is with God. I admit, that our natural proneness to walk by sight, and not by faith, may disqualify too many of us from attaching full weight to this consideration; but then we may be sure, that it will increase in importance, in proportion as it is more deliberately and more maturely weighed. The shadows advance, as the day declines; and so, considerations of this nature acquire an additional force, as we draw towards the hour, when riches lose their value, and pleasure is deprived of its charm. When, therefore, the poor man, who walks in the grace of Christ, and "rejoices in hope of the glory of God," considers his equality in all spiritual privileges with the wealthiest and the noblest of his race; when he kneels before the throne of grace, at morn or eve, with the consciousness of his equal interest with those "of whom the world was not worthy," in the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the Gospel; when he—

———"reads his title clear
To mansions in the skies,"

as pledged by that Saviour, who hath gone before to prepare a place for him; when he meets in this holy place, or in places such as this, with the wealthy or the honourable, before the Lord who is "the Maker of them all;" and, above all, when he kneels at the sacramental board, and feels himself of the brotherhood of Christ, and a partaker of the "flesh which is meat indeed," and of the "blood which is drink indeed"—lives there the man, to whom he is inferior? Assuredly not. Here, at least, whatever they may be elsewhere, the rich and the poor meet on equal terms before their common Father, and their common Judge. Here they are just as much upon a level, notwithstanding the fictitious distinctions which the false refinement of society has introduced—here they are just as much upon a level,

as they are when disappointment strikes, when sickness assails, when death approaches, or when eternity impends. There is no superiority, no nobility, no royalty *then*; *then* it is acknowledged, even by those whose circumstances seem at other times to contradict the really incontrovertible truth, that God is in very deed "no respecter of persons."

The last evidence, of those which I shall now adduce, rests upon the fact, that to all who are "redeemed to God out of every kindred," and of course from every condition—to all those who are "made kings and priests unto God and the Father," all those whose royalty is enduring, whose crown is incorruptible, and whose kingdom shall not be moved—as to all these there is a common Saviour, and there must be a common salvation. If Christ "died for all, then were all dead; and He died for all, that they which live, might not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them, and rose again." All the promises, and all the threatenings of the Gospel, are alike impartial, general, universal. Sovereign and subject, prince and peasant, noble and beggar, are alike members of the visible Church; but within it there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," "one Mediator between God and men," one "propitiation for the sins of the whole world." All, therefore, who shall be convened before the tribunal of the Judge, whether those who reigned or those who served, those who smiled or those who suffered—all shall be separated into two classes, and only two. There are no social, or conventional, or political differences recognised there. There the only distinction is a moral distinction. *Here* are the righteous—*there* are the wicked; here are the sheep on the right hand—*there* are the goats on the left; here are they who are "blessed of the Lord," and destined to abide with Him for ever—and *there* are the "cursed," doomed to "depart into everlasting fire, prepared for" them in common with "the devil and his angels."

And we have also the process of the judgment, as well as the result of it; and from first to last, no difference of condition so much as hinted at. It is assumed, that all possessed the means of glorifying God; and the "cup of cold water given to a disciple," shall no more "lose its reward," than the outpouring of a nation's

royal revenue. Actions will then be traced to motives; practice will be resolved into principles; and inasmuch as aught has been "done to one of the least of Christ's little ones," we shall find that it has been "done unto Him." Every service, every sacrifice, will be acceptable in that day, which shall be found to have proceeded from the operation of a "faith that worketh by love."

But now, my brethren, it is time to ask, what is the practical "conclusion of the whole matter." To which I answer in few, plain and practical words: you that are lowest, do not despond; you that are highest, do not presume; "there is no respect of persons with God."

Some of you, brethren, may be, as David so powerfully and touchingly expressed it, in "the depths." Your circumstances, it may be, are straitened; your blessings are withdrawn; perhaps even the light of your eyes has been taken from you. You are suffering in mind, body and estate. There is a weight that oppresses; there is a snare that entangles; there is an "iron entering into the soul." Yet suffer not yourselves to entertain for an instant hard thoughts of God. It is only "for a season," and because there is a "need-be," that His people "are in heaviness through manifold temptations;" and if it be indeed true, that "all things work together for good to them that love God," then if you love Him, what else may you suffer does not, and cannot, touch your dearest, your eternal portion. It cannot withdraw you from the protecting influence of God's Spirit; it cannot "separate you from the love of Christ." "Whom the Lord loveth," we are told, "He chasteneth;" and if the Captain of our salvation was Himself "made perfect through suffering," then there can be no state of sorrow or of trial, which has not been sanctified by His endurance. Is it poverty? the Son of man "had not where to lay His head." Is it contempt? He was "despised and rejected of men." Is it bereavement? He was left alone in the very crisis of His agony; not forsaken only, but denied—denied with oaths and curses. Is it the pang of acute agony, or the languor of slow disease? "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Is it humiliation on account of sin, and dread of death because death leads to judgment? The

former, indeed, He could not know, for He "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth;" but the fear of death He did, for He prayed "with strong crying and tears to Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared." "Though He were a Son," continues the apostle, "yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered;" and if you, as servants, obey your Master, and, as disciples, imitate your Lord—if you, too, learn obedience from the example, which "He has left you, that you should follow His steps"—then doubt not, but that "if you suffer with Him, you shall also reign with Him." "Your light affliction, which is but for a moment," shall "work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," at the day when it shall be proved in the sight of angels and of men, that whatever earthly appearances might be, "there was no respect of persons with God."

But, lastly, you that are highest, you on whom fortune seems (in worldly phrase) to smile, you who prosper in your undertakings, realise the desires of the heart, enjoy happiness in yourselves, and impart happiness to others—do not presume. I do not bid you not rejoice; God has freely "given you all things to enjoy;" but I do counsel, that your joy be tempered with a salutary soberness of mind. God has given us nothing, which He may not at any moment recal; you possess nothing, which you may not at any moment lose. There is but one "good part;" but one part which "cannot be taken away;" but one thing of which we can say, that hell dare not, earth cannot, heaven will not, take it from us. This is "the salvation which is brought unto us" by the Gospel of the grace of God. It is the "hope that maketh not ashamed;" the "anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the veil." It is the love, by which "faith works" in life, and hope is consummated after death. In one word, it is Christ—Christ now "formed within, the hope of glory"—Christ who is Himself the glory, to which that hope aspires. Oh! then, "seek first," seek ever, "the kingdom of God and His righteousness." Thankful for what you have, more thankful for what you hope, let this be your steadfast aim and purpose: living, to enjoy God in all—dying, to realise all in God.

It only remains, that I add a few words in favour of a charitable cause, which so far connects itself with the subject, as it arises out of a diversity of condition existing among men, though it does not touch the extremes to which I have already adverted. There may be among us the "Lazarus, full of sores," but none lie in this Christian city—or at least ought to lie—"at the rich man's gate;" none are left—or ought to be left—as he was, to the instinctive compassion of the brute creation.

The principle of Christianity, even nominal and national Christianity, is to a certain extent a principle of brotherhood; and if there be, in various grades of society, a difference of apparel and a difference of fare, there is no difference in that medicine, which God hath given to heal our sickness, and to which a claim seems to be made out on the part of the very poorest, by the existence itself of disease. It would be, I admit, a violation of social order, and an abuse of the principle of Christian brotherhood, to reverse the order of society, and make extremes meet; to array the poor "in purple and fine linen," and to pamper them with "sumptuous fare;" but the attack of sickness does give them a claim to all that the wealthiest could provide for themselves. And it is on this principle, that our noble Hospitals—the glory of our country—command the most consummate medical skill; while the Dispensary, operating in the midst of us, is scarcely less essential to a parish or district, of sufficient population, than its Church, or than its School.

To the usefulness of the operations of the Western City Dispensary, of which I am to speak to-night, none can bear fuller or more unequivocal testimony, than my brethren in this parochial ministry, by whom, and by myself, many of the sick poor are sent for the assistance of this Charity; and thus, many a sickness, we believe, prevented by timely remedies, which would otherwise have made the mother, through the pressure of some lifelong calamity, a burden to her family rather than their support and stay; or which might have laid the father, by whose toil their whole sustenance is wrung out of the hard labour of each day, on a bed of sickness—perhaps on a bed of death. Though the operations of this Dispensary are wisely limited to a com-

pact population of perhaps between twenty and thirty thousand, yet it has relieved no fewer than three thousand patients during the past year, of whom more than one hundred were women in "the great pain and peril of childbirth;" and this, at a total expence, which allots little more than the sum of two shillings to each patient. Now this is a very simple fact, but I think it ought to be the most powerful argument in favour of the Institution; and every one who can spare this small sum, even by an effort of self-denial, ought to resolve that he will have, during the ensuing year, his own single patient: by which means he may be the stay of a family, the preserver of a life, and, it may be, instrumentally, even of the soul, for prolonged days afford scope for repentance, and the man who has been suffering under disease, when timely succoured, may arise from the bed of pain or of weakness a wiser and a better man.

But leaving this with God, our duty is plain, at least if we have any thing more than the name of Christian; and it is, to impart to our fellow-sinners and our fellow-sufferers the means of healing for the body, just as God for Christ's sake, and in Christ's blood, has freely bestowed on ourselves the means of healing for the soul. Oh! then, let none of you who have come hither to-night, and who have

incurred by coming (as you will one day know,) a very serious responsibility, whatever were the motives that brought you hither—let none wilfully and causelessly neglect this duty: let none neglect it, either from the impulse of selfishness and covetousness, or the provision for future sensual pleasure or enjoyment: let none, I say, neglect it, who has not provided himself, or who cannot provide himself, with a sufficient answer to the question that I am now about to ask, and that will one day be asked of him again, and by other lips—Shouldst not thou "have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee?" shouldst not thou, who hadst, or who might have had, "much forgiven," have learned to "love much?"

Ah! my brethren, in saying this, our expectations are not from those, who have much to bestow; but we do trust, that those who have little, will do their diligence in such a cause, gladly to give of that little, and that we shall at least perceive, that the usefulness of this Society is duly appreciated by the accumulation, if not of the pounds of the rich, yet of that offering which is equally acceptable in the sight of the Searcher of the hearts—the pence of the poor; and that they who have "freely received," will be the more ready freely to impart.

THE WISDOM AND EXTENT OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

"On Lord! whose kindness and whose care
To all Thy creatures warms, extend,
Whether on earth, in seas, or air,
All live by Thee, on Thee depend.

In all Thy plans, profoundly wise!
In all Thy works, supremely good!
Thy bounty every need supplies,
And fills our hearts with daily food.

Thy Providence extends to all;
Yes, the minute concerns of men,
Mean as they are, are not too small,
By Thee to be observ'd and seen.

If Thou his industry dost crown
With pleasant scenes and prosperous days,
Thine be the glory, Thine alone,
And let his life show forth Thy praise.

Or if, in wisdom, Thou see'st best,
On him to lay Thy chast'ning rod,
Still be Thy name for ever blest,
For Thou art still a faithful God.

Affliction, sorrow, pain, and grief,
Are but Thy messengers to men;
In all, Thou canst afford relief,
And raise them up to joy again.

Oh! then my soul! resign to Him
Thyself and all thou hast and art;
Believe His promise, trust His name,
Nor ever from this comfort part.

Thro' life, in death (that hour of need),
Let this bright hope support thy mind—
Thy God's too wise to be deceiv'd,
Nor can His goodness be unkind.

MIROR QUAM MINIMUS.

THE SOUL IMMATERIAL AND IMMORTAL.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. TIMOTHY GIBSON, M.A.

Curate and Afternoon Lecturer of St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green; Evening Lecturer of St. George's, Southwark; and alternate Preacher at the Early Sunday Morning Lecture, at St. Swithin's.

PREACHED AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
FEB. 2, 1815.

“What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”—Matthew xvi. 26.

WHETHER man is a merely material being, formed only to eat and drink, to live a few years on earth, and then to perish for ever in the dust, or whether he is the partaker of a higher nature, and formed for a more exalted state of being, are questions of vital importance—questions, which deeply involve our character in time, and our prospects for eternity. If, in man, be seen only a material being, whose existence is confined within the limits of threescore years and ten, and who has neither happiness to hope, nor misery to fear, beyond the grave—religion is only, as infidelity has represented it to be, a system of error, encouraging but by delusive hopes, and intimidating by superstitious fears; imposing restraints, to which you are bound by no tie to submit; and enjoining as duties, what you are under no obligation to perform. But, on the other hand, if in man is seen an immortal creature—a candidate for the skies; if, not only death, but judgment awaits him; if everlasting happiness or misery must be his doom—then, religion is the most important subject that can engage his powers; and diligently to learn its truths, and patiently to obey its commands, must be, at once, his interest and his duty.

The worth of the human soul, I propose, in dependence upon the help of Divine grace, to establish on the general principle of its immortality. And give me, I beseech you, your careful attention, and your earnest prayers, that God, who alone bestoweth wisdom, and out of whose mouth alone come knowledge and understanding, may afford us that assistance which we require to our profitable consideration of the subject.

Of the immortality of the soul, we have three kinds of proof: natural, moral, and Divine.

I. Natural. The immaterial nature of the human mind, furnishes so strong a proof of its immortality, as to have forced one of the most subtle advocates of infidelity to acknowledge, that if the soul be, indeed, distinct from matter, the inference can scarcely be avoided, that it is immortal! Let us then, shortly examine, whether we are, or are not, elevated in the scale of being, above the earth we tread upon, and the gross materials of which these earthly bodies are made—whether we are, or are not, by the original constitution of our nature, the subjects of immortality.

It is a principle, which must necessarily be admitted as the ground-work of all reasoning—that, from nothing, nothing can arise; and that for every effect there must exist a sufficient cause. It is the province of reason, and of philosophy, to trace out effects; to explore the source from whence they proceed, and to ascertain, whether the cause which is assigned them, be equal to their production. Were an idolater to inform you, that his god of wood or stone, had often heard his prayer, alleviated his sufferings, and supplied his wants, you would reject his testimony, and pity his weakness; because your own understanding would convince you, that a mere block of wood, or stone, however elegantly formed, or beautifully ornamented, yet, being inanimate, could not hear his supplications, nor afford him relief.

A cause like this, you would perceive must necessarily be unequal to the production of such effects: the testimony, therefore, however confidently given, you would at once reject.

In man, we find perception, consciousness, thought, and reason; and the question presents itself to the inquiring mind—“Do these properties result from mat-

ter; or, have they a distinct, an independent, an immaterial cause?" The existence of the properties themselves, is unquestionable; there must therefore exist some substance, or being, from which, as their *causa*, these effects proceed; and, as we have before remarked, it is the province of reason and philosophy to search out this cause, and to ascertain, as nearly as possible, its nature.

Give to the man of science, any portion of matter, and let him reduce it to its first principles; does he find any one of them the subject of thought or reason? Impossible. Let him examine the nature of the electric fluid, to the instrumentality of which, as some philosophers seem to have taught, the visible creation owes all its variety of texture and form. Does reason reside here? No. Let him investigate the nervous system in the human body, with which sensation is unquestionably connected. Do the nerves possess thinking, or reasoning powers? Assuredly not. The inevitable conclusion, therefore, is, that these powers are neither essential properties of matter, nor inherent in any material elements, within the compass of our research. And it would be absurd to suppose, that the effect can rise above its cause, since that would be to state, that a thing might be produced by a cause unequal to its production; or, that the mind of man has no adequate cause of existence.

If, however, these absurdities are too evident to be admitted; if man possess thinking and reasoning powers; if these powers are neither essential properties of matter, nor inherent in any material element within our knowledge; and if no union of elements can give a power essentially different from those powers, which those elements separately possess—then, the human mind is produced by no modification of matter; but must, in its nature, be immaterial and spiritual.

The intellectual powers of man furnish a second proof, that his soul is immaterial. We have already stated, that no effect can rise higher than its cause; in illustration of which remark, it may be added, that the motion given to an inanimate body, can only be in exact proportion to the force employed. And if no excellency can be communicated which is not possessed, it will assuredly follow, that a material mind must be incapable of performing a spiritual act, or of perceiving an immate-

rial object. But the human mind does perform acts purely spiritual; and does perceive objects purely immaterial; therefore it manifestly follows, that, in its nature, it must be immaterial also.

To think, to understand, to reason, are actions, which it is impossible for mere matter to perform. To see the beauty of goodness, and to feel the force of moral obligation, are also the peculiar prerogatives of man. Truth and falsehood, justice and oppression, benevolence and cruelty, appear to him in widely different colours, and excite in his mind essentially different feelings. He rises higher; he forms conceptions of angels and spirits—of the perfections, and character, and government of God; he prays and praises, reverences and adores; rejoices in Jehovah's favour, and fears Jehovah's wrath. Here, also, we discover powers which mere matter cannot possess; and, therefore, powers, which matter can never communicate.

But an objection against these conclusions is sometimes raised, from the painful effects produced on the mind by the weaknesses and diseases of the body. "Where," says the materialist, "shall we find proofs of the mind's independence of the bodily structure? Of that mind, which, like its clay tabernacle, is infantile in the child, debilitated in disease, enfeebled in old age, and annihilated by death?" This objection however, great as it appears at first sight, is not insurmountable. Though we allow that the mind, during its continuance in the present world, is united with the body, and is so far confined to it, that its senses are the only medium through which impressions are communicated from surrounding objects, and its organs the only instruments by which the mind here carries on its visible operations, yet this by no means proves it to be material; and the objection alluded to vanishes immediately, when we reflect, that the ideas which the mind forms of objects, must, necessarily, be correct or incorrect, in proportion to the perfection or imperfection of the senses; and that its operations must be affected, in some degree, according to the state of the brain. But the senses and the brain are not therefore the mind; nor do they on this account produce it.

This immateriality of the mind deprives the materialist of all positive evidence for its perishableness or its death; it fur-

nishes, if not absolute proof, at least, a strong probability of its immortality; and also lays a firm foundation, on which other proofs of this important fact may rest. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration, as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay. Dissolution is only the separation of the constituent parts of a compound body; and it is effected either by some inward tendency in the nature of that body, or by some outward violence employed; but an immaterial substance, being formed of no union of material elements, cannot be the subject of inward decay, but must preserve the identity of its nature for ever. No means, short of an annihilating act by Him who gave it being, can terminate its existence; and as in this exemption from inward corruption and from outward violence, we have an apparent assurance that such an act will not be performed, the conclusion seems just—that the human soul is not the natural subject of dissolution, but was designed by its Creator to enjoy an endless life.

II. Of this immortality we have proofs of a moral nature.

1. The first of these is derived from the *wisdom* and *goodness* of God. It is the province of wisdom, to adapt the means used to the ends proposed; and of goodness, to proportion happiness to the powers of the object for whom that happiness is designed. The Creator of the world, being infinitely wise, the means employed by Him must, with the utmost exactness, be fitted to the ends proposed; and the powers of the beings He has formed, must be precisely adapted to the proper exercise of those powers, and to the final destiny of the beings themselves; and, as He is infinitely good, provision must be made by Him for the supply of every desire He has implanted. Whether we look at beasts or birds, fishes or insects, all are furnished with organs exactly adapted to the functions they are intended to perform, and to the sphere in which these creatures are designed to move. Nor is there either defect or superfluity observable throughout the whole.

Man, we have said, possesses thinking and reasoning powers, by which he understands truth and obtains knowledge; and even in the present state, much is placed within the limits of these powers. Look-

ing upon the world in which he is placed, he contemplates the wonderful chain of being, carried on by almost imperceptible links through the vegetable to the brute, and through the brute to the rational creation: he searches out the order of parts apparently discordant and detached; refers to its proper class, each moving creature that hath life, and each plant that adorns the garden or the field; he investigates the nature of things, and renders subservient to his own interests, his health or his comfort, water and air, light and heat. He calls the microscope to his aid, and discovers in every leaf, in every drop of water, and in every grain of sand, beings, diminutive indeed, but which, by the perfection of their life and powers, furnish additional proofs of the wisdom and beneficence of God. Rising above the earth, he tells the number of the stars, explains the laws of the planetary worlds, and calculates, with amazing exactness, the periods of their varied revolutions. Passing from nature to nature's God, he beholds in the magnitude and grandeur of the objects that surround him, the majesty and power of God; in their variety, fitness and order, His infinite wisdom; and in the provision made for the supply of the returning wants of every living thing, His providential care and goodness: and passing from nature to revelation, he finds fuller manifestations of the Divine will. Extensive, however, as man's present knowledge may be, yet compared with what remains to be known, it is as nothing. There are yet innumerable regions which man has never traversed, and mines of inexhaustible riches which he has never penetrated. In the nature and reason of things, in the works and ways of God, in the dispensations of Providence and the plan of redemption, he sees much that is veiled in partial or entire obscurity, and which yet escapes his grasp. He is here but in the dawn of being; he sees only in part; not indeed because his powers are unequal to the task of comprehending any more, but because he "sees through a glass darkly," because, though the intellectual eye is strong in many cases, the communicating medium is dim or defective.

And has Infinite Wisdom given these capacities, yet at the same time, resolved that they shall never arrive at perfection? Has Infinite Wisdom furnished the immaterial vessel with powers to ex-

plore the vast ocean of eternity, yet at the same time, decreed that its voyage shall be confined to the narrow straits of this short and uncertain life? Impossible! Divine Wisdom must adapt the means to the end; and adjust the powers of beings to the purposes for which those powers were suited, and to the sphere in which those beings were designed to move.

2. The second proof, of this class, is derived from the *moral* powers of the mind. That such powers are possessed, we have already seen; but, alas! how low is the degree of perfection to which they here attain! Passing by the thousands, who never emerge from the darkness and pollution of sensuality, nor burst the bonds of appetite; who never seek to attain the perfection of their nature, till the sun of life is on the decline, or about to set; and turning our attention to the wisest and best of men to be found in the present state; after all their conflicts with inward depravity, with an alluring world, and a tempting enemy, and after all the conquests which, aided by Divine grace, they have achieved, how low, in reality, are their acquirements! How defective their piety towards their God! How weak their sense of obligation to their Creator and Preserver! How little their reverence for the authority, their gratitude for the mercies, their delight in the favour, and their obedience to the will of their heavenly Father! In a word, how imperfect their conformity to the law and perfections of their God! A voice, in every Christian's breast, echoes the language of an apostle, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; I count not myself to have apprehended."

Impelled by the desires, which the Spirit of holiness has implanted in his breast, the believer "forgets the things that are behind, and reaches forward to those things which are before." He longs for a state more congenial to the best wishes of his heart, a state, in which, irregular appetites shall no more corrupt the mind; in which, temptations shall no more solicit to sin. "I shall be satisfied," he cries, "when I awake up in Thy likeness." And has the God of infinite goodness and wisdom, fitted His intelligent creature for such advancement in holiness, such high degrees of excellence, and will He allow no sufficient opportunities for the attainment of them? Yes! The Wisdom, that gave these powers, designed their

perfection: they shall, therefore, be transplanted to a happier soil, and placed under more genial skies, where they shall bloom as the rose of Sharon; shall flourish in perpetual fragrance and beauty.

3. The last of this sort of proofs of the immortality of the soul, I shall mention, is founded on the acknowledgment which has been made, by men of all ages and nations, of their decided conviction of the truth of this all-important doctrine.

Whether we turn our attention to ancient or modern times, to barbarous or to civilized countries, those have always been found, who have received the doctrine of the soul's immortality. Two striking instances, from heathen writers of antiquity, shall be given.

Zenophon, the Grecian historian, represents Cyrus, as thus addressing his sons, before his death:—"Do not imagine, that when I leave you I shall cease to exist. For even when I was yet with you, my spirit you could not discern; but that it animated this body, you were fully persuaded by the actions which I performed. Be assured, it will continue the same, though you see it not. I can never believe that man lives only while he is in the body, and dies when that is dissolved; or, that the soul loses all intelligence on being separated from an unintelligent mass of earth; but, rather, that on being liberated from all mixture with the body, pure and entire, it enters upon its true, intellectual existence?"

The great Roman Orator represents Cato, thus speaking to two friends:—"As long as we are shut up in this dungeon of sense, we have to toil through the painful and necessary drudgery of life, and to accomplish the laborious task of a hireling. The celestial spirit is, as it were, depressed, and plunged into the mire of this world—a state repugnant to its true nature and eternal duration. Oh! glorious day! when I shall be admitted into the assembly of the wise and good: when I shall make an eternal escape from this sink of corruption, this den of folly!"

If such were the expectations of unenlightened heathens, how much more clearly are life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel!

III. This is the third source, from whence we would draw some proofs of the soul's immortality.

The oracles of God expressly teach the

immaterial nature, the independent existence, and the immortal life of the soul.

The sacred historian, in the account given of the creation of man, has strongly marked the communication of a principle or nature distinct from matter, and different from the gifts bestowed on the various orders of beings which had been previously formed. In the creation of *them* Jehovah is represented as but speaking, and causing it to be done. "Let the waters, or the earth, bring forth the moving creature that hath life," is the command given, and creatures possessing animal life with all its instincts and powers present themselves.

But is *man* to be formed?—the Three Persons of the Deity are called into solemn deliberation. "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness," is the extraordinary counsel taken, and the resolution adopted. Is man to be brought into existence? Strongly to mark the communication of a distinct and superior nature, God himself "breathes into his nostrils the breath of life, and he becomes a living soul." A nature is communicated, superior to that possessed by any other creature of earthly origin, and more nearly resembling the Divine: a spirit is given, possessing thinking and reflecting powers.

In the language of holy confidence adopted by the psalmist—"Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory," we see an expectation entertained of an admission to the realms of everlasting light, at the close of the present life. The wise man concludes his striking description of the infirmities of age and the decays of life, with that solemn declaration—"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Two distinct parts of man are here mentioned; and widely different statements are made respecting them. The body is called "dust," and it is affirmed, it "shall return to the earth as it was;" formed of material elements, to those elements it shall again return. But the mind is styled "the spirit;" and in direct reference to the account given by Moses of the creation of man it is said, it "shall return unto God who gave it." It shall pass, at the death of the body, into another state of existence, and shall be appointed by its Maker and Judge, to dwell in paradise with "the

spirits of just men made perfect," or (since the righteous alone can dwell in that kingdom of holiness,) to suffer the miseries of the lost for ever.

The same doctrine was taught by the incarnate Son of God. When arming the minds of His disciples and apostles against the assaults, which He knew they would have to sustain from the power and malice of the enemies of His religion, He said—"Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Here, also, two separate parts of man are clearly pointed out; and very different declarations are made respecting them. Of the body, the Saviour states—"men may kill it." Material in its nature, it is liable to decay; and by disease, or violence, may be deprived of life. And were the soul nothing more than animated matter, and dependent for its existence on the body, the same stroke that kills the body, would necessarily terminate also the existence of the soul; and, at death, the whole man must die. This, however, the Saviour affirms not to be the case: "men cannot kill the soul." The soul must, therefore, be immaterial in its nature, and must not depend, for existence, on any mere bodily powers.

"The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years:
But it shall flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds."

"We know," says the apostle, "that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God; a house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord."

Such are some of the arguments, in proof of the all-important doctrine of the immortality of the soul of man. It only remains, that we make a short application of the subject to ourselves. And in doing this, I beseech every one of you to put to himself, solemnly and earnestly, the question contained in the text—"What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

What can redeem the immortal spirit?—a spirit exposed, in consequence of its

guilt, to banishment from the presence of God, from the glories of His kingdom, from the joys of His right hand; and doomed to eternal wretchedness and despair? Were the whole material creation offered as the purchase of its redemption, how inadequate would be the ransom, how disproportionate the price!

"Know'st thou th' importance of a soul immortal? Behold earth's midnight glory! worlds on worlds! Ten thousand add; and twice ten thousand more; Then weigh the whole! one soul outweighs them all."

Each of you, my brethren, possesses a soul thus invaluable; a soul, which must live in happiness or misery, in heaven or hell, for ever. This fact, the careless and thoughtless amongst you may disregard or disbelieve. Be it known to you, however, that if a God of omnipotence, of justice, and of grace, have endued you with immortal souls, your neglect or disbelief will neither alter their nature, nor extinguish their being. Enlightened and warmed by the mid-day sun, you may shut your eyes; and then attempt to deny, or profess to doubt, his existence; but such denials, or pretended doubts, destroy him not—they shroud not the heavens in darkness, they consign not the earth to eternal dreariness.

The poor infidel, who, in the hour of death, stretched out his impious arm, and exclaimed—"I will not die!" became, notwithstanding, the prey of the last enemy, and found, when too late, that neither his disbelief, nor his power, could withstand the purpose of the Almighty. You, too, may neglect or disbelieve, but you cannot alter your immortality. You may convert the glory of your nature, into an object of alarm; and turn Heaven's greatest blessing, into your heaviest curse. You may ruin, but you cannot annihilate, the soul. Immortality—a resurrection—a judgment day, are appointed to you by that God whose eye you cannot escape, whose purpose you cannot frustrate, and whose holiness requires that (as His Word has threatened) "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

The question returns, with double force, "What will you give in exchange for your soul?" Pensioners on the Divine bounty, you have nothing to offer; and had you ten thousand worlds, they would not furnish a sufficient price. "It cost more, to redeem the soul."

But, blessed be the eternal name, no price is asked from you. That God, against whom you have so often, and so ungratefully rebelled; whose holiness you have offended, whose majesty you have insulted, whose goodness you have abused, and whose displeasure you have deserved; "wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth!" that God has said concerning you—"Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom." Yes, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." That Son, of whom it is revealed, that "He was in the beginning with God, and was God," came into the world, proclaiming—"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and to give His life a ransom for many." "The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." Well did the apostle say—"Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Behold, then, my brethren, with the eye of faith, your merciful and Almighty Saviour! See Him dying for human guilt; and rising again for the justification of human hope. "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die." Such is the gracious, yet simple declaration of Jesus, the Saviour of sinners.

"Oh! how unlike the complex works of man
Is Heaven's artless, unencumber'd plan!
Inerth'd above the portal, from afar
Conspicuous, as the brightness of a star,
Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the soul quick'ning words—Believe and live!"

To you is the word of this salvation sent. Receive it with that self-appropriation, earnestness, and gratitude, which so well become guilty and perishing sinners; and ever remember, that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;"—that "faith overcometh the world, purifieth the heart, and worketh by love."

CONDEMNATION OF THE REV. G. W. WARD.

THE following are the passages, in Mr. Ward's *Ideal of a Christian Church*, which the Convocation at Oxford has condemned, and for which it has deprived Mr. Ward of his degree:—

P. 45 (note).—"I know no single movement in the Church, except Arianism in the fourth century, which seems to me so wholly destitute of all claims on our sympathy and regard as the English Reformation."

P. 473.—"For my own part, I think it would not be right to conceal, indeed, I am anxious openly to express, my own most firm and undoubting conviction, that were we as a Church to pursue such a line of conduct as has been here sketched, in proportion as we did so, we should be taught from above to discern and appreciate the plain marks of Divine wisdom and authority in the Roman Church, to repent in sorrow and bitterness of heart our great sin in deserting her communion, and to sue humbly at her feet for pardon and restoration."

P. 68.—"That the phrase 'teaching of the Prayer-book' conveys a definite and important meaning, I do not deny, considering that it is mainly a selection from the Breviary, it is not surprising that the Prayer-book should, on the whole, breathe an uniform, most edifying, deeply orthodox spirit—a spirit which corresponds to one particular body of doctrine, and not to the contradictory. Again, that the phrase 'teaching of the Articles,' conveys a definite meaning, I cannot deny; for (excepting the five first, which belong to the old theology) they also breathe an uniform intelligible spirit. But then these respective spirits are not different merely, but absolutely contradictory; as well could a student in the Heathen schools have imbibed at once the Stole and the Epicurean philosophies, as could a humble member of our Church at the present time learn his creed both from Prayer-book and Articles. This I set out at length in two pamphlets with an appendix, which I published three years ago, and it cannot therefore be necessary to go again over the same ground, though something must be added occasionally in notes, and more methodically in a future chapter. The manner in which the dry wording of the Articles can be divorced from their natural spirit, and accepted by an orthodox believer; how their *primâ facie* meaning is evaded, and the articles of their inventors thrown back in recoil on themselves; and the arguments which prove the honesty of this, have now been for some time before the public."

P. 100 (note).—"In my pamphlets three years since, I distinctly charged the Reformers with fully tolerating the absence from the articles of any real anti-Roman determination, so only they were allowed to preserve an apparent one—a charge, which I here beg as distinctly to repeat."

P. 479.—"Our Twelfth Article is as plain as words can make it on the 'Evangelical' side (observe in particular, the word 'necessarily'); of course I think its natural meaning may be explained away, for I subscribe it myself in a non-natural sense."

P. 566.—"We find, oh! most joyful, most wonderful, most unexpected sight! we find the whole cycle of Roman doctrine gradually possessing numbers of English Churchmen."

P. 567.—"Three years have passed since I said plainly, that in subscribing the Articles, I renounce no one Roman doctrine."

A doubt having been raised, whether the University had power to degrade, and to pass the test which it was intended to propose, but which was abandoned, (compelling its members to declare, that they

subscribe the Articles in the sense in which they believe them to be held by the University,) the following queries were submitted to Sir J. Dodson, the Queen's Advocate, and Mr. Bethell, the leader of the Equity Bar:—

1. Whether corporations in general have the power of passing *privilegia* or penal laws against their members, and, if not, whether there is anything in the nature of the University of Oxford to take it out of the ordinary rule?

2. Whether the statute "*De Degradatione*" authorises the House of Convocation to take away degrees by an exercise of its legislative power; and, if not, whether it authorises the deprivation of degrees in arts for a theological offence, such as that imputed to Mr. Ward?

3. Whether, if Mr. Ward's case were within the class of offences contemplated by the statute "*De Degradatione*," it would not be necessary that it should be adjudicated upon by a court competent to inquire into offences against the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England before the university could proceed to deprivation?

4. Whether the proposed deprivation of Mr. Ward's degrees can be supported in law on any other ground?

5. Whether it is competent for the university under the statute, Tit. x., sect. 2, § 2, to pass the proposed new test without license from the Crown, supposing them to be otherwise incompetent to do so in law?

6. Whether, assuming there to be no impediment under the statutes of the university, the power of compelling any member of the university to re-subscribe the articles with the proposed declaration of the sense in which he subscribes, upon pain of banishment from the university, can be legally conferred upon the Vice Chancellor by the House of Convocation?

OPINION.

We are of opinion, that the House of Convocation has not the power of depriving Mr. Ward of his degrees in the manner or on the grounds proposed.

A degree is a certain dignity or title of honour, which the university derives its right to confer by grant from the Crown, and to the rank or *status* thus conferred the law has annexed many privileges, both ecclesiastical and civil.* The university can have no power in taking away this dignity, and the franchises with which it is accompanied,† unless such power be derived from the same source, namely, Royal grant, or has been created by some statute or by-law, which has received the sanction of the Crown, or been confirmed by act of Parliament.

But, upon an examination of the statutes of the university, we do not find any statute which confers upon or recognises in the House of Convocation a jurisdiction or authority to deprive any one of its members of his university franchise,‡ except only in the subordinate office of publicly executing the antecedent decree of a court of competent jurisdiction;§ and we are therefore of opinion, that the proposed act of degradation will, if it passes, be illegal, and inasmuch as, by its consequences, it would deprive Mr. Ward of certain legal rights, we think it may be properly made the subject of application to the Court of Queen's Bench, and that such court would by *mandamus* compel the university to restore Mr. Ward to his degrees,¶ and to the *status* and privileges which he now holds in respect of them.

We desire to observe,** that we give no opinion on the question whether Mr. Ward, by the publication of the doctrines contained in his book, has or has not committed an offence against ecclesiastical law,†† which might be made the subject of a *proper judicial proceeding* before a competent tribu-

* 1 Strange, 557; Selden, 326. † See Maldon on *Origin of Universities and Academic Degrees*.
‡ The universities were first incorporated by stat. 13 Elizabeth, c. 29, and, as the powers and authorities of the House of Convocation are fully defined by statute, there can be no room for the claim of a prescriptive right.

§ See Bagge's case, 11 Coke, 98, b. || *Rex v. Richardson*, 1 Bun., 517.
¶ Bentley's case, 1 Strange, 557, Lord Raymond, 1,334. ** Cases Tempore Hardwicke, 212.
†† See the proclamation of James I. prefixed to the articles, and stat. 13 Elizabeth, c. 12.

nal; but simply that in our view of the case the House of Convocation is not such a tribunal, and that the notion that it can degrade by virtue of some general or legislative power appears to us to be erroneous.

Should the resolution pass, Mr. Ward may have another remedy, namely, an appeal to the Crown as Visitor of the University; and this may be resorted to even if the Court of Queen's Bench should, on an application for a *mandamus*, decline to interfere.

With respect to the second statute, which, in effect, proposes to annex a new sense to subscription, we are of opinion that it is contrary to law.* The law requires the clerical subscriber to take the articles in their literal and grammatical sense, but the proposed statute requires him to take them in that sense in which he believes them to have been originally framed and promulgated, and also in the sense in which he believes them to be now accepted and taken by that body which, at the time of his subscription, constitutes the university.† Thus the belief or conjecture of the subscriber upon these two difficult subjects of inquiry is substituted for the legal interpretation. Should this statute pass, protesting members of convocation might perhaps appeal to the Queen in her capacity of Visitor of the University; but a shorter remedy will be to apply for a prohibition, in case the Vice-Chancellor shall proceed to require any member to subscribe the articles with the proposed declaration.

JOHN DODSON.

RICHARD BETHELL.

Doctors'-commons, Jan. 17, 1845.

The foregoing Opinion having been made public, the University Authorities issued the following Document:—

Questions submitted to Counsel on behalf of the Board of Heads of Houses and Proctors, respecting the Propositions to be brought before Convocation in the matter of Mr. Ward; and Opinion of the Solicitor-General, Sir C. Wetherell, Dr. Addams, and Mr. Cowling.

1. Whether the university has any power of depriving a party, for any cause, of any degree which has been conferred upon him?

2. Whether the extracts given in the notice issued by the Board of Heads of Houses and Proctors contain sufficient cause to justify the degradation of Mr. Ward?

3. Whether the House of Convocation has the power of degradation in this case?

4. Whether, in proceeding to degrade Mr. Ward, the university will render itself liable to a writ of *mandamus* at its suit?

OPINION.

1. We are of opinion, that the university has the power to degrade, and that the power is by no means limited or confined to cases of prior conviction of an offence by a court of competent jurisdiction, nor to those particular cases enumerated in the Statutes to which degradation is specifically annexed.

2. We are of opinion that the extracts set forth in the notice contain sufficient cause to justify the House of Convocation, as representing the university, in taking cognizance of them, and coming to a decision on the subject with a view to the degradation of Mr. Ward; but whether in the result the charge preferred against him shall appear sufficient to justify the House in degrading him is a conclusion which must rest entirely with, and be formed by, the members of Convocation, upon consideration of the whole matter.

3. Provided Convocation shall, upon consideration, come to the conclusion that Mr. Ward ought to be degraded, we are aware of no ground for impeaching or questioning the validity of the degradation.

4. If the determination of Convocation should be to degrade Mr. Ward, and he should apply to the Court of Queen's Bench for a writ of *mandamus*

to restore him, we are of opinion that it will be an answer to it, that her Majesty is Visitor of the university, and that the subject lies exclusively within the province of her Majesty as Visitor; and that any complaint against the proceedings of Convocation must be made to her Majesty in that capacity, and cannot be withdrawn from her jurisdiction.

F. THESIGER

CHARLES WETHERELL.

J. ADDAMS

JOHN COWLING.

REMARKS ON THE CASE.

We have before us the two most important ecclesiastical and religious bodies in the world, FORK and PROTESTANTISM. The distinctions between them are, confessedly, fundamental and essential. So much so, that Popery not only once burned at the stake the upholders of Protestantism, but proclaims, to this hour, in her official documents, and by her living ministers, throughout the world, that Protestants universally are accursed, and have cut themselves off from the Church of God and the hope of eternal life. On the other hand, Protestants in general, and this Church in particular, hold that the theological errors of Rome are fundamental,—not only her errors in practice, but her errors in principle,—and, in consequence, the founders of the English Reformed Church, framed Articles and formularies, intended, and which till now have been held amply sufficient for the purpose, to guard our Reformed Church, and all her members, against the destructive heresies of Rome. And not only does our Church rest on this basis; but the national mind has ever been so clear on the subject, that the reformed civil constitution of this Christian people rests on the same foundation. The whole proving this truth, if facts and principles can prove anything, that the distinctions between our Reformed and Protestant Church and Papal and unreformed Rome, are fundamental: that they are so held by both parties; and that the utmost pains have accordingly been taken by both that the principles and practices of the one Church shall not be contaminated by the principles and practices of the other.

In these circumstances, Mr. Ward proclaims himself to be a Papist, and proposes that he shall continue to minister in this Protestant Church. And if he may so minister, of course every other similar sentiment may also. And he reasons, and the Tractarians in general it is just and honest, and Christian that he should so do; and every variety of expedient and finesse and subterfuge is resorted to to enable this man to maintain this position.

It is entirely monstrous. It is not themselves wise allowing themselves to be fools. And far worse than fools, unless the words be taken in the scriptural sense. They are, in their wisdom, breaking down the first principles of morality and human virtue by which the social body is held together; and they appear, at least the most froward of them, to be left by God to believe their own lie. But we trust, however it may be with men deluded by learning, falsely so called, that the ordinary principle and common understanding of the nation will revolt against such glaring aberrations from the first principles of morals, and will hold in deserved and well merited contempt and abhorrence a course of conduct which would disgrace the savage and barbarian.

With such perceptions of the case we can have no sympathy with the innumerable difficulties interposed, by parties immediately interested, to prevent the expression of the mind of the University in relation to Tract No. 90, which developed the principles upon which Mr. Ward has acted. The principles of that tract have been condemned by nearly every Bishop on the Bench, and they are worthy to be held in universal abhorrence; and the minor and trifling considerations which have been advanced to prevent, for the present, the righteous condemnation of the University, display, in our judgment, a pious want of a just apprehension of the paramount importance of Divine truth, and a most injurious sympathy with men who have proved themselves enemies of the truth of the Gospel.—*Record.*

* 13 and 14 Charles II. c. 4.—the Preface to the Articles.
† *Præsumit editos* † *Et nec mihi ab universitate propositos.*

ENOCH.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. TIMOTHY GIBSON, M.A.

Curate and Afternoon Lecturer of St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green; Evening Lecturer of St. George's, Southwark; and alternate Preacher at the Early Sunday Morning Lecture, at St. Swithin's.

PREACHED AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
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* *"By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."*—Hebrews xi. 5.

Men are uniformly anxious to obtain the good opinion of others; and, no wonder, for a good character is every way desirable. Where this is, there is confidence, there is happiness, there is that which commands respect. Hence Solomon observes—"that a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." Great riches cannot exempt from care and misery; but a good conscience, which usually attends a good reputation, speaks peace and comfort in the darkest hour.

But, it is the approbation of God, that is of the first importance; for "His favour is life, and His loving kindness is better than life!" This is attainable; the blessing is within our reach; and the way to acquire it, is clearly marked out in the sacred Scriptures; and will come plainly before us in illustrating the words of the text.

Enoch was the seventh from Adam; and, for more than three hundred years, his contemporary. Much is not said of him in Scripture; but the little that is recorded is striking and instructive. Let us consider—

First, the testimony which he obtained; secondly, the favour which he realised; thirdly, the important lessons which his history suggests. And, oh! that every one of us, may now lift up his heart in silent, earnest prayer to God the Father, in the name of Christ Jesus, for the descent of the Holy Spirit amongst us at this time, to enable me to speak and you to hear, so as that God may be glorified, and our immortal souls profited and saved.

We observe—

1. The testimony, which Enoch obtained—"that he pleased God."

With regard to the manner in which, or the peculiar medium through which, he obtained this testimony, we have no express information in the sacred history; yet, where there are general principles, and known facts, on which to ground our conjectures, it is not improper to reason, even in the absence of positive and direct discovery. It may be remarked—

1. That it could not have been by his superior gifts, and extraordinary acquirements. Strong natural talents he might have possessed; extensive improvements, in the various arts, he might have made; and, if we are to believe profane history, he did make; but these things did not distinguish him as the friend of God. It is indeed delightful to see learning and piety combined, but we must not forget that mere genius and talent cannot, of themselves, prove their possessor to be blessed with the favour of Jehovah.

2. Nor was it by the abundance of his worldly prosperity. It is true, that "godliness has the promise of the life that now is," as well as "of that which is to come;" and that its natural tendency is to promote prudence, industry, and temperance, which are favourable to health, and temporal advantages; besides which, it brings down the Divine blessing, "which maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it." Nevertheless, the good things of this life are so given out by the sovereign Donor, that it is impossible for any man "to know love or hatred, by all that is before him under the sun."

The good man may pine under sickness; and the offender against God may enjoy the blessing of health. "Children are an heritage from the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is His reward;" but the

righteous may go childless; whilst the wicked has a numerous and thriving offspring.

Worldly eminence and honour are not always attendant on piety. Ahaba, as well as Davida, may sometimes be seen in royal robes; and the ungodly and profane are sometimes exalted to the high places of the earth. Nor is the possession of wealth the exclusive heritage of the godly: for "the grounds of a certain rich man, brought forth plentifully, and he said within himself, What shall I do? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and I will say unto my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods, laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said, Thou fool! this night shall thy soul be required of thee! Then, whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" Thus we see, that, in earthly concerns, "the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

3. It was not by a showy religious profession, that he obtained this testimony! Many have made great pretensions, who were never approved of God. Many such, it is to be feared, there are, in our day; when religion has, to a certain extent, become common and fashionable amongst us. There are things now, to which too much importance is attached as proofs of godliness; such as admiring a faithful minister, and establishing a form of religion in the family: these signs, unaccompanied with other things, are not enough to demonstrate that you are walking consistently with God. There may be "the form of godliness," where "the power of it" is entirely denied. What a difference may be often seen in a man abroad and at home! in the house of God, and in his own house! How does the zeal of such an one diminish—until, at last, it is extinguished—and there remains only an awful darkness, an impenetrable veil, between God and his soul! Nor need we wonder at this: such a man is not actuated by principle; he is only influenced by a regard to reputation. There is little excitement to be met with at home; therefore, devotion languishes; family worship is often shortened, and, perhaps, occasionally omitted.

Alas! that the language of family prayer and praise, should ever be mingled with family quarrels: that the father should be seen "provoking his children to wrath;" and that there should be now the objection-

able publications of the day upon the table, and now the Bible—now, godly talk with the godly, and now, malevolent discourse with the slanderer; and that thus there should "proceed out of the same mouth, both blessing and cursing: brethren, these things ought not so to be!" "For the kingdom of God," says the apostle, "is not meats and drinks"—no outward thing—"but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Hence, we must look for something different from all these, as the medium through which Enoch obtained "the testimony that he pleased God." It might have been by some special and direct communication from Jehovah, either to himself, or to some of his contemporaries, as in the case of Noah, of Abraham, and of others. It might have been by the inward voice of an approving conscience, as in the case of the apostle, who could say—"Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." And the testimony, thus enjoyed, was not confined to particular occasions, but he possessed it in the closet, in the family, in the Church, and in the world.

Let us now inquire, more particularly, into the character which Enoch sustained, and the course of life which brought down the Divine approbation, and obtained for him this blessed testimony, "that he pleased God."

In the original account given of this illustrious man, in the book of Genesis, we have his moral and religious character delineated in this simple, but comprehensive statement—"Enoch walked with God!" This is the noblest distinction; the most valuable attainment; the most desirable privilege. Every thing else is transitory and fading. Youthful vigour and beauty are but as the short-lived flowers of the spring, which fall as soon as they are blown. The honourable distinctions of this world are empty bubbles, which burst and disappear for ever. Scientific researches and discoveries are scarcely more than amusements of children; for here, we can "only know in part; we can only see through a glass darkly:" but holy walking with God is the most honourable employment of man; it is a permanent, a perennial source of satisfaction: it is the relief of sorrow; it is the conqueror of death; it is the gate

of immortality; it is heaven itself, as far as it can be enjoyed upon earth! But wherein does this consist?

1. In a firm persuasion of the reality of the Divine existence, the perfections of the Divine nature, and the principles of the Divine government.

The man who truly walks with God, beholds in Him every thing great, every thing good, every thing suitable, every thing perfect and glorious: wonderful in His works, holy in His nature, wise in His purposes, immutable in His counsels, and blessed, for ever blessed, in Himself. What mind that is enlightened, and brought to contemplate the perfections of Jehovah, but must say, with the psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee! Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!"

But, again: walking with God implies—

2. The habitual impression of His all-pervading presence. The Christian knows that He, who is the First Cause of all things, must be every where; hence he says—

"Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
I am surrounded still with God!"

The vast universe is His dwelling-place. Should you be tossed on the tempestuous waves of the ocean; should you wander in the wilds of a pitiless desert; or be left unbefriended in some lonely retirement; yet, if you are a Christian, you will every where realize the presence of your God and Father, and find that He is near to sustain, and save in every time of need.

3. This holy fellowship with God consists in the enjoyment of His friendship. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" It is said of Abraham and Moses, they "talked with the Lord, as a man talketh with his friend!" How blessed is it to be able, through Christ, to look up to God, and say, "My God!" to know that all His perfections are employed in promoting and securing my present and eternal welfare; to feel a growing desire that my will may, in every thing, be conformed to His will; to say, with filial love and confidence, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory!" This would make "a little heaven below;" and exhibit a distant view of the beautiful regions of endless glory.

Again: walking with God, implies—

4. The constant and obedient discharge of those high and sacred duties which

true religion demands. Enoch's religion was not merely speculative; but solid and practical. As a man, as a parent, and as a believer, he walked with God. His religion was not occasional, but constant; not an act, but a habit: in a word, religion formed his character, and was interwoven with all the conduct of his life.

My brethren, does the example of this holy man condemn any of you? Instead of true religion being your element, is it your aversion? Are any of you ignorant of its real nature? Do you altogether neglect it? Perhaps, you say, you have had so much business, that you could not attend to these things; but have you not "entangled yourself with the affairs of this life?" You are "not to be slothful in business;" but industry in your calling need not prevent you from being "servant in spirit, serving the Lord." These duties may be combined; they have been combined in others—and may, therefore, be combined in you.

But some may still say—"I have no leisure." Is not this untrue? How much leisure does each of us daily consume! If many were to make as free with their substance, as they do with their time, they would soon be bankrupt. Others, perhaps, urge, "I have no talent." Those who have not five talents, yet may have two; those who have not two, have at least one; and it was the possessor of the one talent, who hid it in a napkin, who was the unprofitable servant, and the wicked servant, and was therefore cast into outer darkness!

Again: this holy walking consists—

5. In a resolute adherence to the worship and ways of God, in the midst of universal degeneracy and opposition. Hence, we are told, by St. Jude, that "Enoch prophesied of the wicked, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince them that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

My brethren, if we would approve ourselves to God, in our religious profession, there must be integrity of principle, and firmness of conduct. If professing Christians and the world are to meet half way, remember this—that the worldling keeps his ground, but you are drawn off from

yours. You then lose the influence of your religion—you lose the distinctive character of your piety; it is no longer in the nature of a testimony borne on the side of God; for He says to His people—“Ye are My witnesses.” Abide, I beseech you, by the decisions of God’s Word. Make the Bible your constant guide; this can never lead you astray. Be concerned to preserve the sensibilities of your conscience unimpaired. Guard against the fascinations of error, and the corruptions of the world. Remember the importance of closet devotion—retired religion—private communion with God. Be afraid of sinful companionships; form no ungodly connexions or engagements: none, on which you cannot ask and expect the blessing of God. “Abstain from all appearance of evil;” not only the reality, but even the semblance of it. Abstain from the scenes of forbidden amusements and unholy gratification. Be decided for God, though fools may deride your choice, and though the world may laugh at, and condemn you. Let it be yours, thus to demonstrate the reality, and to illustrate the excellency of “pure and undefiled religion.”

Indeed, when you have followed a worldly companion, and he has led you into crooked paths, what have you gained? Have you not rather been injured? Have not your best interests suffered? But when you have gone straight forward, aiming chiefly to please God, and bearing your unflinching testimony against sin in every form, have you not found that the path of duty is the path of safety, and that the path of constancy is the path of honour?

When, “in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, you have had your conversation in the world,” in the Church, and in the family, have you not felt peace within? have you not secured the esteem of others? and has not God testified of a character such as this—“Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile?”

But it may now be useful to trace out the principle, upon which this character was formed, and by which this conduct was produced.

In describing the case of Enoch, the apostle states the exercise of faith as the principle, which brought him into that course of action which was pleasing to God. “By faith,” that is, through the power and exercise of faith in Divine

truth, as at that time it was revealed—“by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God;” that is, he pleased God by his faith. In the following verse there is a statement of a more general nature, as to the absolute necessity of faith, for bringing men into that state which is pleasing to Jehovah: “without faith, it is impossible to please God.”

Faith has a peculiar connexion with the approbation or pleasure of God, in consequence of its being the appointed means of imputing to man the merit of a justifying righteousness, which in itself is sufficient to secure his final acceptance before God, as the righteous Judge of the universe. The principal subject of the Bible relates to the provision of an all-sufficient sacrifice for sin, in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. The institution of animal sacrifices, which took place soon after the fall of man, was intended to prefigure the great atonement to be offered on Calvary’s cross; and the offering of those sacrifices by enlightened and pious men in the early ages of the world, should be regarded as the expression of their faith in that precious atoning blood to which they refer, and from which alone their efficacy and value were derived.

In every age of the world, faith has had one, and the same object. From Abel, down to the last of the prophets, and from the fisherman who left his nets, his worldly all, to follow Jesus, down to the end of time, the being, the nature, and the will of God, have only been, and can only be known, and the mercy of God savingly embraced, through a Mediator. No sinner has ever been redeemed but by “the blood of the Lamb:” no sinner has ever entered heaven, but through faith in the Son of God; therefore, faith in the blood and righteousness of Christ, is the very soul of religion.

In the verse preceding the text, Abel is mentioned as exercising faith in the same propitiatory sacrifice: “By faith,” that is, in the promised Messiah, “Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.” Cain offered to God a sacrifice which had no reference to the propitiation for sin, it being merely the flowers and fruits of the ground; whilst Abel, in sacrificing a lamb from his flock, typified, and declared his faith in, Jesus

"the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

As this was the faith of Abel, we cannot but conclude, that this was the faith of Enoch, the faith of Noah, the faith of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and of all those who, in early times, were numbered among the servants of God; they rejoiced in Him, whose great sacrifice was foreshadowed by the beasts that were slain upon their altars. And now that these types and shadows of the first ages have all passed away, and the atonement of the Cross, which was "the end of the law for righteousness," is exhibited to us in all the fulness and lustre of clear and unrivalled majesty—it becomes men to regard that atonement, as the object of implicit faith and confidence, while the generations of time shall last, and until the succession of ages shall be swallowed up, and lost in the boundless expansion of eternity. And what can inspire love to God, and holiness of life, but the same principle of faith? This is the foundation of all Christian excellence, and the root from which grow up all those "fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God!"

Here, then, we see the use, and the importance of faith: without faith there is not only no proficiency in holiness, and no advance in the Divine life, but there can be no real religion.

Having arrived at the close of the first branch of the discourse, and time forbidding us now to finish it, we must defer the consideration of the remaining topics until another opportunity. Let us improve what has already been said, with some practical reflections.

1. Faith is the gift of God. Let those

of you who have it not, seek it. Time is short, life is uncertain. How knows he that addresses you, but that he is speaking to you for the last time? The angel of death hovers around; judgment hastens; eternity approaches; and, if you depart from this world, without saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, into heaven you cannot enter; where God is, you cannot go!

Go, I beseech you, this night, from the sanctuary to the scene of private retirement; bow at the footstool of Divine mercy, and implore the gift of faith. Is there one here, who has never yet, for one single hour in his life, retired for the purpose of thought, and examination, and prayer? Let it be said of you, this night, "Behold, he prayeth!" Beg of God to bestow on you a contrite and believing heart. Ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit, that He may "take of the things that are Christ's, and show them unto you." "Seek the Lord whilst He may be found, and call upon Him while He is near."

2. Let those who have some degree of this invaluable blessing, seek for more of it. The first Christians could say, "We joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement:" "we believe, and therefore do enter into rest!" Oh! ye mourning, doubting, desponding believers, why is not your experience like theirs? Why are you not rejoicing in the Lord? Christ is the same; His blood has the same efficacy; and His promises have the same certainty now, as then. The fault is in yourselves: you are dishonouring God by unbelief. Hasten, I pray you, to the Cross; fall down at the Saviour's feet, and say—"Lord, increase our faith!"

ENOCH.

A SECOND SERMON, BY THE REV. TIMOTHY GIBSON, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK, ON SUNDAY EVENING
FEBRUARY 23, 1845.

"By faith, Enoch was translated, that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."—Hebrews xi. 5.

THE methods by which the children of men have become partakers of the blessings of spiritual salvation, have in all

periods of the world been precisely the same. The dispensations of Divine mercy uniformly exhibit one foundation,

as that on which the hopes of men must always repose. It is delightful, to remember that there is "one Lord and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all."

The perfect uniformity of the method of obtaining redeeming mercy, is strongly set forth in the important epistle, from a portion of which we have now to address you; its main object being, to show that the preceding dispensations of religion—patriarchal and levitical—were only shadows, fleeting types of the Gospel, intended to set forth, and finally to be resolved into, the same principles of truth.

Without adverting to many examples of this fact, you cannot read the contents of this important chapter, without perceiving how distinctly and remarkably it is displayed; exhibiting the heirs of salvation in different ages of the world, as being governed by one principle, and as being guided in one path to heaven. It is thus, my brethren, that we who live in "these last days," have a deep interest in their history, deriving from it no small portion of that instruction and excitement, by which we are to be urged yet more and more in our progress towards glory, honour, and immortality.

The passage before us is a record concerning Enoch, a saint who lived previous to the visitation of the general deluge, whose piety, in that age of darkness and corruption, was eminent and enduring, and who was especially summoned to his reward by some mitigated and mysterious change, with which "the king of terrors" had no concern, and which was a peculiar testimony of the approbation of God.

In a former discourse on these words, we proposed to consider first, the testimony which this holy man obtained; secondly, the favour which he realised; and thirdly, the important lessons which his history suggests.

Having already, at some length, examined the first of these propositions, let us now, in dependence on the Divine blessing proceed to consider—

II. The favour which he realised: "He was translated, that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him." Here observe—

1. His removal from the world. He was taken away in the vigour of life—at the age of 365 years; which bore only the same proportion to the years of his son, as thirty now does to seventy—the present age of man. Yet he may be said to have been old; for life is not to be estimated by its length, but by its usefulness. Whilst he remained on earth, he lived to good purpose. Some continue a long time, and when removed, their departure seems to make no chasm, to occasion no regrets. But there are others, whose loss is felt severely through an extensive rank of survivors, who have sustained the relation of friends, acquaintances, dependants, or beneficiaries.

Enoch had lived long enough to attract regard, and to excite esteem. His course, though short, was useful; and God honoured him with an early dismissal from a degenerate world, and from a scene of conflict and sorrow.

Let us endeavour so to live, as to "please God;" and then, whether our course be long or short, our end will be peace. And whilst "the memory of the wicked shall rot, the just will be had in everlasting remembrance."

His removal from the world was sudden, as well as early. Moses tells us, "he was not." By the brightness of his character, he attracted universal observation; but whilst his acquaintances were gazing at him, he disappeared from their view. The apostle informs us—"He was not found;" intimating, that the men of that day so much missed him, that they made diligent search after him.

"He was not found, for God had translated him." What a delightful transition! He rose in the morning, perhaps, in health; engaged in the active duties of the day with his usual serenity; and whilst employed in holy meditation, or pious converse, or benevolent exertion, he was suddenly removed from earth to heaven. No painful illness befel him, no parting from weeping friends; but, one moment in the way of his duty, and the next in the regions of immortality!

My brethren, it will soon be said of us as of Enoch—"They are not!" Our bodies, indeed, may be found; but the spirits that animated them, will have passed into another world. Our departure may be early and sudden, too. Death waits not for confirmed age, and trembling years, to realise his triumphs; but smites when and where God commands:

we may be summoned at any time; when full of health, and full of business and schemes for the present life, God may send his messenger to you, pronounce you to be in a state of "folly," and snatch you away in an instant from this transitory state.

And oh! are you prepared for this great, this final change? Are you ready to renounce the things of this present life? What! you who idolize them so tenderly? you who have all your thoughts and hopes fixed on this world? Can you be prepared to die, who are calculating confidently on years to come? Can you be ready to renounce this life, who are so fondly attached to its pursuits, its pleasures, and its gratifications? And will you, by refusing to forsake sin, continue in this awful state? Remember, that when death calls,—willing or unwilling, prepared or unprepared—you must go; for "there is no discharge in that war;" "there is one end to the righteous and to the wicked!" It is to the good man *only*, that sudden death is a privilege, a thing to be desired, or regarded with complacency.

We notice—

2. Enoch's admission to heaven.

"God took him." Having guided him by His counsel during the period of his mortal pilgrimage, He at length received him to glory. Where God is, there is heaven. The blessedness of the future state consists, mainly, in being with God. This includes vision: hence it is written—"They shall see His face;" "I shall behold Thy face in righteousness." Fellowship is also included; there, especially, our communion and fellowship will be "with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." Conformity, likewise, is intended; there can be no being thus with God, without being like Him: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." There, also, will be perfect blessedness; this is the necessary consequence of being with God; for "in His presence is fulness of joy, and at His right hand are pleasures for evermore."

My brethren, let me ask, Are you ready for heaven? St. John says—"Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as Christ is pure." Are you in the enjoyment of peace with

God? are you in a state of harmony with Jesus Christ? or are you in a state of spiritual darkness and wretchedness, of distance and alienation from God? If so, I do beseech you to acquaint yourselves with Him now, and be at peace; to wash in the "fountain" which is still "open for sin and for uncleanness;" that, being clothed with "the white vesture," you may appear at last among those, who cry aloud—"Salvation to our God, and to the Lamb for ever." Heaven is a state of unchanging and perpetual bliss; such a heaven, is worth enjoying, and, consequently, worth seeking. "Strive, then, to enter in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat; but strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Notice again—

3. The singular and unprecedented mode of Enoch's transition from the one world to the other.

He was not taken in the usual way from earth to heaven; for, since "sin entered into the world, and death by sin," it has been "appointed unto men once to die." The common passage into the invisible world is through "the valley of the shadow of death." But God may enact new laws, or suspend the operation of those already established. Hence, in the case of Enoch He "created a new thing in the earth;" He dispensed with the original decree—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;" He granted an exemption from the universal law of mortality, and took him to heaven without allowing him to realise the process of dissolution; his was not death, but translation.

As Scripture is altogether silent, it behoves not to indulge an idle curiosity as to the manner in which this translation was effected; whether by angels, as in the case of Elijah; or in a cloud, as in the case of our Lord; it was, doubtless, intended to teach the men of that generation some important lessons; for whatever were the means, the fact itself was accompanied with sufficient and satisfactory evidence.

It was, unquestionably, a substitute for death. In some such way as this, it is probable, men would have passed from earth to heaven, had not sin entered into our world, and brought death along with

In a similar way, it is certain, will those, "who are alive, and remain at the coming of Christ," be made to enter upon their final blessedness. "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. The dead in Christ, shall rise first; then we who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Enoch did not die, but he was changed; he took his body with him, but it was refined from the grossness of its animal state by some mysterious process, corresponding in its effects to death and the resurrection; for it is the language of reason, as well as of Scripture—"flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

And oh! my brethren, it was a desirable mode of transition! There is something naturally appalling in the dissolution of the human frame; hence, death is represented as the "king of terrors." Dying, in itself, must be the object of our aversion, when we reflect on some of its attendants—the aching head, the feverish pulse, the beating heart, the wearisome days, the sleepless nights, the madness of convulsion, the confusion of delirium; and who can think of these, without some feeling of alarm? Even where there is no dread as to consequences, there is much in the circumstances of dying, to render it a subject of fearful apprehension:

"The pains, the groans, the dying strife,
Fright our approaching souls away;
And we shrink back again to life,
Fond of our prison and our clay."

St. Paul himself felt something of this, when he said—"For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

From all these melancholy circumstances of dying, Enoch was mercifully exempted; his body underwent a change from what was natural to what was spiritual instantaneously; so that he at once entered into the fulness of the beatific vision of the Lord God Almighty.

But no such mode of transition remains

for us; we must enter heaven through the gate of death. Still, my Christian brethren, let us guard against being unduly alarmed at the prospect of our dissolution. If you are walking with God, if you are sincerely desirous of pleasing Him, then, He who translated Enoch, will receive you to Himself; your spirit shall enter into the same bliss, and your body also shall rest in hope, and will certainly be delivered from the power of hell and of the grave. It is already redeemed. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." Hence it is the Christian's privilege to look forward to the grave, and say—

"My flesh shall slumber in the ground
'Till the last trumpet's joyful sound;
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise."

Let us consider—

III. Some of the important lessons which this instructive dispensation suggests. And—

1. It shows the connexion there is between a life of holy obedience, and the Divine approbation. There is no other method of securing the favour of God, but "the obedience of faith." "Deny thyself, take up the cross, and follow Christ in the regeneration"—for all profession without this, will only be "as the sounding brass, or as the tinkling cymbal." Unless you fight against sin, the world, and the devil; unless you "continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto your life's end," you will never carry the palm of victory: unless you bear the cross of humiliation, you can never wear the crown of triumph!

2. It teaches us, that singular piety shall be attended with singular honour. Enoch, doubtless, had his imperfections, but he lived in a day of peculiar degeneracy; "all flesh had corrupted their way." Yet he stood firm amidst the tide of universal depravity, which rolled its billows against him on every side. He was neither ashamed of his religion; nor corrupted by the vices that so awfully prevailed. Jehovah admitted him to inti-

mate communion with Himself on earth; and translated him to the realms of glory above: and thus said to a depraved race then, and to us also, "upon whom the ends of the world are come"—"Them that honour Me, I will honour!" "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reprove them!" Stand up for Me, against the world of evil doers; and verily, ye shall find that "there is a reward for the righteous!"

When the mind is given to the service of Jehovah, and the heart renders practical obedience to His law, it must make the character of man dignified and blessed. Continue in the service of the world and sin, and there will be a progressive resemblance to the image of Satan. Engage in the service of the adorable Redeemer, and there will be a growing conformity to the likeness of God. Your body will be the temple of the Holy Ghost; whilst you dwell on earth, you shall breathe the atmosphere of heaven; and whilst you are the inhabitants of this world, you shall be surrounded by the glories of the world which is to come.

3. The history before us, proclaims the doctrine of immortality. Facts strike the mind, more powerfully than reasonings. By the translation of Enoch, it was seen that there was another state of being after this: that there was a place of residence, besides this earth, which was to be obtained by departing from this life, and that even the body, the frail weak body, was to inhabit it.

This was an event of importance; nothing had before happened like it; hereby the minds of men were instructed. They saw what the body is capable of becoming; and they had a view of that glory, which has been more fully revealed under the Gospel dispensation. Now, it is our mercy, my brethren, to live under that gracious dispensation. We are clearly taught, that Jesus "through death, hath destroyed him, who had the power of death, that is, the devil: that He might deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." Now, to the people of God, the darkness of death is dispelled; the sting of death is extracted; the terrors of death are removed; the waters of death are dried; and they have but to pass, as in a secure channel, under the guidance of Him, who is the Priest of the New Covenant, to "an inheritance, which is in-

corruptible, and undefiled, and which fadeth not away."

All, who have pleased God in this world, shall meet to enjoy His glory in another. Sin, sorrow, sickness, and death, shall be for ever done away; and they shall be "before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them; and shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes!"

4. The text reminds us of the happiness of departed friends who have died in the Lord.

What agony have some of you felt, when sitting by the bed-side of a dying relative, and marking the rapid approach of the inexorable foe! How sad, to watch that adversary whom no bribe can stay! How distressing, to witness his growing triumph, as the strugglings of nature become feebler and feebler! The pulse no longer beats; the heart ceases to throb; the eye becomes darkened; and, at last, the conquests of death, the victorious enemy, are planted over the breathless corpse!

Am I speaking to any, who have recently been called to sustain this heavy trial? Are there none here, who feel the truth of what I have asserted?

Oh! let me speak to you the words of comfort: "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, from henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours." Dry up those tears of anguish. Why should you sorrow, as men without hope, for them that sleep in Jesus? Look to that "Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord; and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity!" Think of the arrival of that period, ordained in the counsel of God, when, at the sounding of the archangel's trumpet, the dust of all those who have believed in Christ, shall rise to a glorious immortality. Yes, the time shall come, when all who have slept in their graves, shall come forth again. Their sepulchres shall be opened by the Saviour; and those bodies, which had been given to decay, and had mouldered into dust, shall "be fashioned by Him, and made like unto His own glorious

body, according to the mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself!"

Or am I speaking to a Christian who desponds in the prospect of his own departure? Why doubt? You will have the atonement of the Saviour. Why doubt? You will have the promises of God, which are "all yea, and amen, in Christ Jesus." Why doubt? You will have the presence and smile of Him, who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Go, therefore, and stand by the river, not with dread, but with confidence and peace.

"Shudder not to cross the stream,
Venture all thy care on Him;
Him whose dying love and power
Still'd the tempest, hush'd its roar.
Safe is the expanded wave,
Gentle as a summer's eve;
Not one object of His care,
Ever suffer'd shipwreck there!"

There is but one remark to which I would call your attention in concluding this discourse, and it is simply this—the importance, the unspeakable importance, of "pleasing God." You have heard, I trust, with at least ordinary attention, the interesting subject, which, from Holy Scripture, has, at this time, been brought before you; and I would fain hope, that the conviction has been produced in every mind, that nothing is so momentous for us, as to be numbered among those who please God. This congregation is composed of two classes—those who please God, and those who displease Him. There can be no neutral ground. A great gulf spiritually separates the two—those who possess His approbation, and those who inherit His displeasure. Those of you who have entered this sanctuary in the character of careless, unconverted persons, I would affectionately exhort to contemplate, for a single moment, your dangerous position, both for time and eternity. You are destitute of the dispositions and principles which are essential to acceptance with God. You do not please Him. And is this nothing? Oh! from what privileges you are excluded! You have no intercourse with Him, no protection in seasons of difficulty and danger, no prospect of an admission to the realms of eternal glory. You please not God, and therefore are liable, every

moment, to endless banishment from the presence of the Lord, into outer darkness, "where their worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched." And when the awful period shall arrive, to which we have adverted, and you must stand before the Son of man in judgment, can you be content, that then it shall be your character, 'You do not please God?' What would it profit you, if human applause had flattered you with its powerful incense? What would it profit you, if history had inscribed your name upon its almost imperishable pages; if monuments of brass, or marble, had been reared to perpetuate your memory? Pleasing not God, my brethren, all these heaped together, would be but like fuel, for the flame of the final conflagration. Then, bare and naked, without an ornament, and without a plea, you would stand before the bar of the Eternal, with this one sad and fearful consciousness—"God is angry." Then thunders will roar, then lightnings will flash; and then, to you, the universe will be but one scene of dark and fearful convulsion, amidst the agonizings of which, fiends will grasp, and remove you from the presence of Christ, and from the glory of His Father, into those regions of never-ending woe, where God's frowns alone are seen, where His character of love is changed, and He has "forgotten to be gracious."

I do trust, that a mightier Spirit than the instrumentality which has come from the lips of the preacher, is breathing and working amongst you; and that not a few of those who entered, having around them the darkness of sin, and under the displeasure of God, will depart, having within them the dawn of spiritual light, and upon them the favour and blessing of the Most High.

From henceforth, let this be our ambition; not to please the rich, or the great, or the mighty—not to please men, but God. And then, when our spirits shall have left this world, devout men shall carry our dust to the tomb, and wiping away the tears of nature's sorrow, shall inscribe over our sepulchre—"Before he died, he had this testimony, that he pleased God." "Even so, Lord Jesus. Amen."

CHRISTIAN CONSOLATION RELATIVE TO DEPARTED SAINTS.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. S. J. DAVIS.

PREACHED AT SALTERS' HALL CHAPEL, CANNON STREET,
ON SUNDAY EVENING, FEB. 23, 1845.

On occasion of the death of the late John Low, Esq., of Edmonton.

'Wherefore comfort one another with these words.'—1 Thessalonians iv. 18.

THE Christian system is characterised by Divine adaptation to the purposes for which it was revealed. It is suited, as an instrument, to call men from "darkness to light, from Satan to God:" it is equally "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is peculiarly rich in consolation. It pours forth, in the writings of the sacred penmen, an amplitude of the comfort, "wherewith they were themselves comforted of God." It supplies us with "exceeding-great and precious promises," suited to the varied afflictions of a world of probation and conflict; and in prospect of the termination of our career, in death, it furnishes us with words of comfort, which show, in the comparison, that all other systems are utterly worthless and contemptible.

In several verses which precede the text, the apostle directs us for consolation to the second advent of the Lord. As, however, other sources of encouragement are exhibited in other parts of the New Testament, I propose to consider the general subject:—THE CONSOLATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY RELATIVE TO DEPARTED SAINTS.

I. Let us begin by inquiring, what consolation is supplied by Christianity relative to departed saints, during the interval which will elapse between the period of their departure and the period of the second coming of the Lord. In vain do we look elsewhere for satisfactory information. Observation teaches us nothing. Abstract reasoning affords no assistance. Apart from the light which revelation supplies on this mysterious subject, we are totally and hopelessly in the dark.

1. Christianity teaches that the souls of departed saints are in a state of *consciousness*. On this point, the statements of the New Testament are explicit, frequent, and decisive. It was asserted, in varied

and impressive forms, by the great Teacher himself. In the parable of Dives and Lazarus, the rich man is represented as in a state of consciousness, the subject of suffering, and of earnest desire for the salvation of his brethren who were still in the body; and as it cannot be supposed that Lazarus was in any respect in an inferior condition, we conclude that he was in a state of consciousness; that his soul, though at rest, was not in a condition of sleep. Abraham also is described as the subject of conscious life, carrying on a conversation with the wretched sufferer; and his condition determines that of the happy being, who reposed in his bosom. It militates nothing against the value of this evidence, that it occurs in a parable; it is deduced naturally; and it is impossible, that the parables of our Lord, whatever their circumstances and drapery, should proceed upon and sanction error. In answering a question of the Sadducees, our Lord affirmed, that the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob was the God of the living—an affirmation which distinctly teaches, that the patriarchs were living in the days of Moses, when the declaration was made, although their bodies several centuries before had "seen corruption." It is scarcely possible to conceive, language on this subject more explicit than that of our Lord to the dying thief, "This day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." Only on the principle of conscious existence after death, could this language have imparted consolation to the expiring sufferer. On the hypothesis of the sleep of the soul, it supposes a carelessness of speech, a mockery, an insult, which it would be the height of folly and impiety to charge on the incarnate Son of God.

The language of the apostle Paul shows, that the doctrine now contended for was thoroughly established in his mind. When he affirms, in reference to his rapture in paradise, that he knew not whether he

was "in the body or out of the body," he implies, that his spirit might have visited the happy place in a disembodied state. And when he informs us, that "he heard unspeakable words," there he suggests that the mind may receive the sublimest ideas on the loftiest subjects, apart from material organisation. In writing to the Philippian the apostle says, "For me to die is gain." But as a Christian man, in the enjoyment of that happiness which is connected with Christian principles and habits; as a benevolent man, concerned for the welfare of the Church and the salvation of the world; as an eminently devoted servant of Christ, he could not have regarded death as a gain, had he contemplated it as the suspension, perhaps for ages, of his conscious existence—as his reduction to a state tantamount to temporary annihilation. In comparison of his condition in the present world, he could have regarded death as desirable, only on the principle that his spirit would rise higher in the scale of conscious enjoyment; and that this principle was the basis of his calculation, is evident from his other statements, of themselves decisive on the point, that when "absent from the body, he would be present with the Lord;" that he "desired to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

The same doctrine is forcibly taught, though in language highly figurative, in the book of Revelation. In reading the following passages let it be observed, that the scenes they unfold relate, on every scheme of interpretation, to the condition of saints and martyrs subsequently to their departure from the present world, and antecedently to the resurrection. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood, on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." Again: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence

came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Whatever may be the exact interpretation of the several parts of these highly figurative descriptions, it is scarcely possible to read them with ordinary candour, without perceiving that they are fatal to the cheerless doctrine of the sleep of the soul—a doctrine out of harmony with all we know respecting spirits, their highest aspirations, and the fact, that at death those of the righteous become sinless; and which certainly borrows no recommendation from the circumstance; that it is favoured by those who deny almost every thing in Christianity which is peculiar, vital, and saving.

2. Christianity teaches that the souls of departed saints are in a state of *dignified repose*. The world which they have quitted, is one of toil, conflict, and suffering. As they were not exempted from death, so neither were they delivered from the labours and diseases, which, by wearing out the human machine, prepared the way for it. They were no strangers to disappointment, vicissitude, bereavement. In resisting the solicitations of Satan and the world; in keeping the body and the soul in subjection to the laws of Christ; in cultivating the graces of the Spirit, conformity to the Redeemer, preparation for "the inheritance;" and in seeking the prosperity of the Church and the salvation of perishing men, they found that this was "not their rest." From all such toils spirits departed in the Lord are released. They are in "Abraham's bosom," the place of security and repose. "I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours." They rest from their labours. They have no longer to provide for the body; that reposes in the tomb: nor to occupy arduous posts in the Church and in the world; to these Providence has

called their successors. They rest from the conflicts of life. The death of the body will be the signal of the death of sin in the soul; their malevolent adversary, the devil, cannot penetrate into the mansions prepared for their reception: and there "the wicked cease from troubling." They rest from all the sufferings, characteristic of this sinful state. They are beyond the bustle and the din of the commercial, the political, and the religious world. Divested of all remains of corruption, freed from irregular passions, and from the influence of material objects, they have nothing against which to "watch and pray." Were they travellers—racers weary and longing for repose? Their journey has terminated; their race is run; they have reached the goal. Were they mariners? Their voyage is over; they are beyond the reach of darkness, tempesta, and all the dangers of the deep. Were they warriors? Their battle is fought, the victory won; they require no more "the whole armour of God." Sweeter than the most balmy sleep of the exhausted labourer is their ineffable repose: and not less dignified than grateful. There is no loss of consciousness, no suspension of the higher operations of the soul. There is at once the intensest life, and the most complete repose. Without approximating to what may be meant by the sleep of the soul—"they rest from their labours."

3. Christianity teaches that the souls of departed saints are in a *state of felicity*. Happiness in the Divine administration is invariably connected with, and proportionate to holiness; and since at the period of departure the "spirits of just men are made perfect," their present happiness far transcends what they experienced here. Even if no direct rays of heavenly light were cast on the subject, the social tendencies of the soul would suggest the hope, that the spirits of departed saints have the bliss of pure and elevated intercourse. The mode of their consciousness we cannot conjecture; it is, however, much more rational to suppose, that they have fellowship in modes unknown to us, than that, existing consciously in the same place, they should be isolated, solitary, incommunicative; like the inmates of a silent prison. But both in the parable of our Lord, and in the scenes in the Revelation, we are taught to infer that disembodied souls are not only conscious, but communicative; that they have the felicity of interchanging their pure and

elevated conceptions. Their happiness arises principally from the presence of Christ. This the apostle has expressly asserted. We ask in vain in what manner they enjoy the presence of Him, who, in a glorified body, appears as our Advocate before the throne in heaven; revelation asserts the fact, but vouchsafes no explanation. Since, however, we are taught, on the highest authority, that the disembodied saints hold intercourse with the Redeemer, more intimate than any with which they were favoured here, their happiness must be augmented in a degree eminently desirable. That they meditate on the great themes suitable to the contemplation of sinless souls, flows so naturally from the fact of their consciousness, as to require no definitive announcement. Neither can we hesitate to conclude, that they are familiar alike with the pleasures of memory and of anticipation. With emotions of liveliest gratitude they review the leadings of Providence, and the communications of grace; and with emotions not less delightful, they look forward to the great "appearing," when God their Redeemer will consummate the felicity of their whole nature, and introduce them to "the new heavens and earth, in which righteousness will dwell for ever."

II. Let us, in the next place, inquire, what consolation Christianity supplies relative to departed saints, on the termination of the intermediate state, and in connection with the second advent of the Lord.

Judging from their language, many Christians appear to think, that the complete happiness of the soul is enjoyed immediately on its dismission from the body. The supposition does not accord with the dictates either of reason or of revelation. How can the happiness of the departed be complete, while their nature is incomplete? How can such an idea comport with the fact, that, according to the Scriptures, the *second coming* of Christ is, emphatically, the hope of the Church? How does it accord with the statements that "David is not yet ascended into the heavens;" that the ancient saints "cannot, without us, be made perfect;" that Paul did not desire to be "unclothed"—without his resurrection body; but "clothed upon"—having his resurrection body—"that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

Pursuing the discoveries of the Word of God, it is to be observed—

1. That Christianity teaches the doctrine of the *resurrection of the body*. It does this with such perspicuity and emphasis of repetition, that its denial, by any who admit the inspiration of the New Testament, is most surprising. So intimately identified, indeed, is this doctrine with the Christian system, that the blow which should destroy the part, would prove fatal to the whole. "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ risen; and if Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." That there are difficulties connected with the identity of the body, cannot be denied; but they are difficulties only to us, not to God; and difficulties of the same kind attend our present existence. Human bodies are perpetually undergoing changes; the bodies of the aged have undergone several; yet the consciousness, the experience, the common sense of mankind, affirm their identity. So in the resurrection. We shall know ourselves to be the same, others will recognize us as the same, we shall be the same in relation to the Divine government, as the subjects of reward; just as the man who committed crime fifty years ago, is, in the eye of human law, the same that he was when the crime was committed. In announcing the resurrection of the body, Christianity announces a power adequate to its accomplishment. Mysterious, stupendous, overwhelming as is the prospect that the countless myriads of the human family will be raised from the dead; that whatever shall have been human, after its complete dissolution and endless combinations, shall stand forth in all the integrity of its original humanity; infinitely as it transcends human power and human thought, the accomplishment of it is not too hard for the Lord. It will not overtask Almightyness; the pledged omnipotence of Jehovah, is more than adequate to the wondrous result. The power which created the universe, is that which will raise the dead. "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." In meeting the objection to the resurrection, borrowed from heathen philosophers, that the body is a clog to the soul, and that it is the greatest deliverance to be eternally freed from connexion with matter, the apostle states, that as

different existing material bodies are distinguished by different degrees of glory, so in the resurrection, while their identity will be preserved, our bodies, as to dignity and utility, will be far in advance of what they are now. Power will be their characteristic, instead of weakness; the engagements of eternity will not weary them; they will perform their part in serving God in His temple "day and night" for ever. Their present humiliation will be succeeded by the highest glory; the glory of endless vigour and unfading beauty, the glory of being conformed to Christ. They will exchange corruption for incorruption. No elements of decay will enter into their composition; they will be beyond the reach, and insusceptible of impression from accident and disease; death will have no more dominion over them. They will be immortal, as well as immutable; as secure from annihilation as from decay. They will be spiritual. Freed from the gross and the sensual, raised above the necessities of this sublunary world, refined, ethereal, without losing their material basis and character, they will be admirably suited to the nature and employments of the perfected mind, affording it the most valuable facilities in exploring the works, and accomplishing the will of God. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

2. Christianity teaches the *public recognition and reward* of the saints, immediately after the resurrection. It announces, that at the second advent there will be "the manifestation" of the sons of God. In the presence of the assembled universe, their Judge and their Redeemer will reveal their character, and proclaim their heirship to the "incorruptible" inheritance. Every subject of the spiritual kingdom will be seen wearing the badge, and invested with the honours, of the citizenship of heaven. Every member of the mystical body will appear in his true position; not only acknowledged by, but sharing the glory of, the ever-living Head. The Church, as the bride of

Christ, attired in the robes of salvation, will be greeted by her Lord, and raised to share in all the honour of His appearing. Varied phraseology is employed on this subject. We read that "Christ loved the Church, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish." Again we read, "Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." We read again, "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, unto the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever." The great day will show that there is no discrepancy between these statements; while they serve, at present, to make it evident that the public recognition of the saints will in every respect be complete.

Connected with the recognition, will be the public declaration of reward. Christ has promised, that if, as the subjects of His redeeming grace, we serve Him voluntarily, and with self-denial, we shall have a "great reward in heaven." In the day of His appearing, He will redeem His promise to His people, adjust the reward of each, and announce it to them and to the spectators of their honour. "Well done, good and faithful servants; enter ye into the joy of your Lord." "When Christ who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory."

3. Christianity teaches the complete and eternal happiness of the saints. This is the consummation of its purposes, promises, and preliminary transformations. Dwellers upon earth, we cannot fully appreciate, or even understand, what God has prepared for them that love Him; but, to elevate our anticipations, it is set forth by images, drawn from whatever is sublime and attractive in creation. From everything which is now the occasion or the index of imperfection and sin, we shall be delivered. In the celestial world there will be nothing to disturb, to endanger, to destroy; no darkness, no curse, no death; while there will be everything to make us happy, which the wisdom, benevolence, and power of God, according to the capabilities of our nature, can bestow. The sacred writers frequently announce the ultimate state of happiness, in the simple, but comprehen-

sive terms, "everlasting life." Only the realization of this sublime announcement will enable us fully to apprehend all that it includes; we may, however, be tolerably certain, that our intellectual life will be perfect; our mental powers attaining their full expansion and strength, and finding endless employment in the study of the almost boundless works, and the infinite perfections of Jehovah: that our moral life will be perfect—including our complete conformity to the Divine purity and benevolence, and our entire consecration to the Divine will: that our social life will be perfect—our capacity of enjoyment from companionship reaching its utmost energy, and receiving commensurate gratification: that our whole nature will intensely live, and intensely enjoy; that our happiness, in the fullest sense of the term, will be complete and eternal.

Having, then, the consolations of Christianity, let us anticipate our dismissal from the body, with Christian hope. The hour of our departure must come. Let us expect it with calm dignity, and even exultation. If death were the extinction of our being; if it were to introduce us to the second death; if it were even tantamount to temporary annihilation, well might we anticipate it with trembling and dismay. But since the body and the spirit, each according to its nature, will repose from the toils of life; since, after a period which, considered relatively to eternity, will be extremely short, both the constituent parts of our nature will be connected in the bonds of a perfect and indissoluble union; since there is in reserve for us "everlasting life;" what more befitting, than that, in unperturbed and joyous anticipation, we should exclaim—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Having the consolations of Christianity, our sorrows should be modified on the departure of beloved Christian connections and friends. On our own account, we cannot but lament their removal; for so intimately were they associated with us, so strong, mutual, and constant were our sympathies, that in losing them, we seem to have lost a part of ourselves. Christianity allows us to mourn; even its Divine Founder wept at the grave of His departed friend. But ill would it become us to "sorrow even as others, who have no hope." The spirits of our brethren who have died in the Lord, are in a state

of repose and bliss, from which, if it were possible, it would be the highest refinement of cruelty to recall them. Even their dust, precious in the estimation of the Redeemer, rests in hope. Our separation is but temporary. The moment of reunion cannot be far distant. We shall join them in the world of souls; our spirits will be brought with theirs at the coming of the Lord; we shall rise with them in the resurrection of the just; we shall dwell with them for ever, in the presence of "Him who is our life." "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

We are supported by these consolations in the loss of the departed friend and brother, whose removal has given occasion to the present service. It is due to his character, and to the position which he occupied long and honourably in this Church, that I should speak of him with respect and affection at such a moment as this; as, however, nothing was more opposed to his principles and tastes than laboured eulogy, I am bound to speak with brevity and simplicity.

The understanding of our brother was sound; he was distinguished by a large share of common sense. His reading was more varied and extensive than might have been supposed, considering his habits of business; and, as his memory was retentive, his conversation was uniformly intelligent and instructive. It was always manly and serious: I do not remember ever to have heard from him a foolish, frivolous remark. In all his transactions he was religiously upright. Early in the Christian life, he considered with himself in what manner he could best evince and recommend religion; and having concluded, that in his circumstances, high integrity in all his relations and engagements was most befitting, he determined, that with the Divine help, it should be the characteristic of his life. How well, by the grace of God, he acted out that determination, many of you are witnesses. It would be unkind, to harrow up the feelings of survivors, even to do him justice as a husband and a father. It is sufficient, to say that deeply as his family deplore it, they have yet to learn his loss. His views of religious doctrine were those usually denominated moderate Calvinism. These he held on an intelligent faith, and in righteousness of life. His benevolence was not confined to the ordinary channels of annual subscriptions;

it was often secret. Several facts have come incidentally to my knowledge, to justify this remark. Only a few days before his mortal sickness, he authorised me to draw upon him for the relief of a respectable, but distressed family, to whom he was personally unknown.

Without bigotry, he was warmly attached to the denomination to which he belonged. This Christian Society, in particular, cannot but regard his memory with respect and affection. Through life, and even on the bed of death, he took the greatest interest in its prosperity. His residence at a distance from the city, coupled with the depressing influence of disease, prevented him from being personally with us as much as we could have desired. Notwithstanding this, the pastor, the deacons and the Church have lost an invaluable friend.

His last illness was extremely distressing and protracted. On principles of piety, and by the manifest aid of Divine grace, he bore it not only without a murmuring word, but, according to his repeated and grateful assurances, without an unsubmissive feeling. Indeed, his acquiescence in the will of God, was most instructive and impressive. Notwithstanding his sufferings, his days were passed, for the most part, in earnest converse with God. He "knew in whom he had believed;" and hence his peace was unbroken. He died as he lived—"looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." "Let me die the death of the righteous; and let my last end be like his!"

I cannot close this solemn service, without an appeal to the unrenewed. The consolations of Christianity are intended for, and adapted exclusively to, Christians. The Christian system addresses you in the language of earnest remonstrance and solemn warning. Continuing in your present worldly, impenitent, unbelieving state, it teaches you, that at death you will be hurried to the regions of unhappy spirits; that in the resurrection, you will rise to shame and contempt; that in the judgment, you will be disowned and condemned; and that eventually you will be driven, with "Satan and his angels," into final perdition. Without a total change of character—including repentance, faith, consecration to Jesus—you must perish. Urged, then, by the warnings of the Christian system, by flying to Christ, by embracing the "great salvation," secure its consolations.

A SERMON, BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A.

PREACHED AT CAMDEN CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
MARCH 2, 1815.

'Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me.'—Matthew xi. 29.

In the exhortation, of which our text forms a part, we behold the meek and compassionate Saviour, after a plain setting forth of His own righteous sovereignty over the souls of men, as the author, promoter, and finisher of their spiritual life, kindly inviting them to embrace His proffered friendship, to acknowledge Him as an elder Brother, to confide to His unfailing guardianship their hopes of happiness in life, and of peace beyond the grave.

And who were they, whom he thus kindly called to Him? Were they the wise and the learned, who thought the Gospel could teach them nothing? or the rich and the powerful, who thought His service could procure them nothing? or the self-righteous and the proud, who fancied that for peace and pardon they need owe Him nothing? No; they were the weary and the heavy laden, who were ready to acknowledge that to Him they owed all—their opened eyes to understand, their softened hearts to feel, their renewed minds to follow, their awakened souls to pray: those who would come to Jesus gladly, and bring their heavy burdens with them—burdens of sin, of sorrow and of care—of spirits broken on the wheel of slavish and unworthy fears, of consciences bowed down by a mill-stone of remembered guilt, of souls harassed with the assaults of foes, whose nature is not of flesh and blood, and whose spiritual name is Legion. To such Christ spake, in accents of more than human tenderness—"Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." Rest from the perplexities of a doubting mind; rest from the disquietudes and cares of life; rest from the accusations of a guilty conscience; rest from all unworthy fears, either for this life or for that which is to come.

'And yet,' the Saviour seems to continue, 'let me not deceive you in this matter. When I speak of "rest," I do not mean inactivity, I do not mean indolence; neither do I mean an unvarying state of spiritual repose and quiet; for if I were to give you these, you would be foolish enough to wish that earth were your perpetual home, and you would never sigh for those mansions of immortality, which, albeit they be approached by a

long avenue of trial, and must be entered through a vestibule" of "much tribulation," are the only homes, in which peace and purity can ever dwell. No; there is a yoke to be carried, and you must bear it; there are lessons to be practised, and you must learn them. "Learn of Me," who have already for your sakes borne the yoke of humiliation and scorn, and am about to bear the yet heavier yoke of pain, and death, and spiritual desertion. You, indeed, may be spared *My* cross; but you must not expect to be spared *your own*. There is no gold in heaven, but what hath passed through the "refiner's fire." The racer's crown is not to him who looks on, but to him who runs; and you must share the believer's labour, before you can participate in the believer's recompense. "Take," then, "My yoke upon you, and learn of Me;" and then, in due season, if you faint not, "you shall find rest unto your souls."

God grant, then, that we may all be learners to-day—learners of Christ; that the great Teacher may Himself deign to occupy the chair of instruction, and give us a clear and spiritual understanding—first of the yoke He would have us bear, and then the truths He would have us learn. Come, "take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me."

I. First, let us inquire, what is the "yoke," that Christ would have us bear? And this we may consider under two aspects: as a yoke of self-denial, and as a yoke of humility.

1. The Christian's is a yoke of self-denial.

"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself," says our Lord; and in furtherance of the same precept, the apostle commands us to "mortify our members which are upon the earth," and "crucify the flesh with its affections and its lusts." Now no language can be stronger than this; and its spiritual import is not to be considered the less binding, because it is veiled in metaphor. Still, we must beware, that we do not pursue a metaphor too far; we weaken the spiritual analogies, when we try to anatomise them, till, finding that when subjected to such a process, one meta-

phor often contradicts another, we do not trouble ourselves about the application of either. We must not, therefore, suppose, that by the apostolic image of a crucifixion of the natural affections, it is intended that the aim and scope of the Christian life should be to eradicate those affections from the heart, and to place all the comforts and concerns of life under a perpetual interdict: as if God delighted to thwart and to oppose the very inclinations, which He had made to form a part and parcel of our moral frame-work; or as if for the mere sake of testing our subjection to His authority, and without any perceived or declared view to our own spiritual advancement, He would enjoin such privations upon us, as must necessarily give us pain, or impose restrictions upon us, that would make us unhappy.

In what sense, then, are we to understand such expressions as those to which we have referred, as descriptions of the yoke which Christ would have us take upon us?

Why, their import may be best understood from the objects with which they stand connected, and to the attainment of which they are to be made subservient. For example; when am I required to "cut off my right hand?" Why, when I am doing wickedness with both hands so earnestly, that I must either go "halt and maimed" to the kingdom of heaven, or else not go there at all. When am I asked to "pluck out my right eye?" Why, when it is gazing with such unhallowed and absorbing intenceness on things which "perish with the using," that, like Paul, I must be struck blind by a merciful flash from heaven, before I shall begin to look on, and care for, the things "that belong unto my peace." The occupations, therefore, which you are to deny,—the affections which you are to mortify,—the desires, the recreations, the pleasures, which you are to nail to the cross-beams of a spiritual crucifixion,—may be all comprised under the simple category—*hindrances in the way to heaven*. You need not "cut off the right hand," if with unmaimed and uninjured members you can "run with patience the race that is set before you;" nor need you "pluck out the right eye," if you can keep a steady and sanctified object before you, whilst you retain the two; but when it is by blindness alone that you can be made to see, and by being maimed alone that you can be retarded in your career to destruction, who would keep back either eye or hand, or refuse to submit to the yoke of Jesus?

You must deny yourself, therefore,

whatever gratification keeps you away from God, and whatever sin separates God from you. It is not enough, that you can prove certain things harmless in themselves, unless you can also feel that they are harmless to you; that your desire for them does not rise to such an immoderate pitch, as to enfeeble or destroy the affections of the renewed mind, to hinder the faithful discharge of duty, and to throw an air of mechanical dullness over those holy exercises, which are at once the strength of the Christian pilgrim, and his best earthly recompense.

There is no difficulty, therefore, in determining what you are to deny yourself. You are to deny yourself the habit, which is surely, though it may be slowly, drawing you away from God. You are to deny yourself the gratification, which past experience hath taught you, indisposes you for all spiritual communion. You are to deny yourself all needless intercourse with society, in which you can neither hope to do good, nor expect to get good. And you are to deny yourself all honour, wealth, distinction, favour, for which the conscious endangering of your soul's interest must be given as the purchase money. And this is all we mean, when we call the yoke of Jesus a self-denying yoke. You are entering the service of a Master, who only denies you the liberty of committing spiritual destruction, the right of laying violent hands on your own happiness, the permission to overleap those moral fences, between whose sanctified boundaries lie the path of present peace, and the approach to future happiness.

2. But, again: we say that this yoke is a yoke of humility.

Pride is the natural parent of more than half the misery and guilt of our present state. There is the pride of intellect, which will reject the "great mysteries of godliness," because they will not contract their vast dimensions, to suit the dwarfish proportions of the finite mind; there is the pride of heart, which likes to have salvation on its own terms, and wonders what charm the waters of Jordan should possess, which could not equally be found in the broader rivers of Damascus; and there is the pride of self-confidence, which mistaking the renewed mind for its own mind, and imparted grace for inherent grace, and the deliverance which the Spirit of God has begun, as already wrought out by its own hand and arm, goes forth to the world, as if there were no dangers to meet, no enemies to assail, no armed spirits lying in invisible ambush, to waylay every straggler, who has

the presumption to think he can fight alone. Now all these forms of pride must fall like the idol before the ark of God, before we shall be enabled to take the yoke of Him, who is "meek and lowly in heart."

We say, the pride of intellect must fall. Christianity has done more towards expanding the powers of the human mind, and enlarging the field over which its faculties may expatiate, than all the false systems of religion put together; and therefore it has a right to expect from that mind, in return, a devout and reasonable submission on subjects, which lie beyond the province of human inquiry, and which, whether true or false, must rest solely on the authority of Him who reveals them. Moreover, when men speak of the mysteries which the Gospel introduces, they keep wholly out of sight the mysteries which the Gospel destroys: mysteries which, like spectres, peopled the dim twilight of the soul, when the world by wisdom was trying to "find out God," and by the glow worm light of unassisted reason, seeking to attain to the knowledge of His ways. But God would show man his littleness, his ignorance, his utter intellectual feebleness. He allowed him to grope after God, "if haply he might find Him;" leaving him, as the poet says, to spike up his inch of soul on the point of philosophic wit, and then, as he was exulting in his taper, to let him cry, Behold the sun! We are not, as you may suppose, trying to disparage the exercise or the claims of human reason; we are only desiring to contrast with the devout intellectual submission to the revealed facts of Scripture, which is a part of our Master's yoke, that weak and confident opinion of our own capacity, which supposes that all the "deep things of God" may be made to float on the surface of human understanding; which demands a kind of evidence for religious truths, which from their very nature they are incapable of supplying; the pride which professes to believe only what it has power to comprehend—a "royal mode," to be sure, of abridging the articles of one's creed. Brethren, ye are never so much "men in understanding," as when in spirit ye are "children." The more you profess to know, the less you must expect God to teach you. The best scholars in Heaven's school learn their lessons upon their knees. "Take My yoke upon you," says the Saviour; and in that submissive attitude, "learn of Me."

Again: this yoke of humility is opposed to that self-righteous spirit, which refuses to accept Gospel salvation on

Gospel terms. Strange it is, but not more strange than true, that the very freeness of that grace, which is offered to us in the Gospel, is with many the chief stumbling block to its acceptance. They would rather reconcile themselves, than that God should reconcile them; they would rather "go about to establish a righteousness of their own," than "submit to the righteousness of God;" they would rather trust to their Laodicean wealth to buy them a passport to the kingdom of heaven, than they would throw themselves, naked as they are, and helpless as they are, and miserable as they are, at the feet of Him, who alone bath pardon to grant, who alone bath immortality to bestow. But this pride must be brought low. If you will profess, that you "are rich, and have need of nothing," God will take you at your word. The day will come, when you will require "raiment, to cover the shame of your nakedness," and "fine gold" to appease the stern "king of terrors;" and then you shall tell out all your wealth from your spiritual coffers, as a bribe to him for letting go his grasp, but Death will not part with you for such a worthless price. He will say unto you—'Jesus I know, and His wealth I know, and had the spiritual riches you have been trusting in, borne His "image and superscription," I could not have withheld your passport to the gate of life; but the only wealth you have brought me is a proud morality, a self-sufficient uprightness, a long drawn-out register of alms, and duties, and fasts, and exercises, the very best of which were tainted with that impurity, which constitutes the strength and the sting of death.' Though with Christ's righteousness death could not have withheld you, with your own he will hold you fast for ever.

In like manner we must cast down the pride of self-confidence. For want of a thorough knowledge of their own hearts, some persons who really desire to take upon themselves the yoke of Christ, think themselves equal to every duty which can be required of them, and every temptation which could assail them. They have perhaps been enabled to gain some eminent victory in their Christian warfare; but instead of ascribing all the glory of it, to the power and the grace of Jesus Christ, they foolishly and ungratefully ascribe it to themselves. Hence arises a disregard to the assisting grace and hourly succours of the Spirit, and a consequent carelessness of temper, which sooner or later will betray them into the most dangerous mistakes. The yoke of Christian humility,

therefore, will require us to renounce this fleshly confidence; so that whilst we shall feel it a duty to exert all the powers of the soul in the service of our Divine Master, we shall still rely upon His grace, in order to obtain success, and, having obtained it, shall thankfully give Him the victory.

Learn, then, brethren, that when grace raises you to a holy elevation of spirit, and the soul appears to be soaring on the wings of spiritual communion with its Maker, all your safety at such time lies in humility, in self-abasement, in utter distrust of any power of your own either to aid your further flight, or to keep you from an ignominious fall.

II. But we observe, in the last place, that the Christian not only has his Master's yoke to bear, but his Master's lessons to learn.

He whom we obey as Lord, trust as friend, believe as Saviour, follow as guide, must also become our bright example, in all the devious paths of life. Of Him we must learn those lessons of practical piety, which make the glory of God our undivided aim, and the will of God our fixed and unbending rule. "I have set the Lord always before me"—is a passage which, as you remember, was in its primary and prophetic sense to be referred to the Messiah, as indicating that one unvarying object, for which He stooped, and bled, and died; which made Him raise from its ruins the fragments of our spiritual temple, and sanctify earth's moral waste by making it the theatre of His passion; that lofty object, which gave royalty to His manger, majesty to His humiliation, dignity to His low estate; which shed a glory more than human, on the beams which formed His cross, and kindled a brightness more than earthly in the rock which became His tomb. Now, if we would "learn of Christ," this object must be our object. To the illustration, advancement and setting forth of the Almighty glory, must all our aims and objects be subordinate. It must govern our wills, decide our actions, determine our choice of occupations, enjoyments, and society. Self must be dethroned, and its fancied interests forgotten, in order that God may be honoured, loved and served in its room.

But not only must we "learn of Christ" what are the great ends of life, but we must learn also what are the best means to secure them. He who had neither sin to defile, nor corruption to struggle with, nor curse to roll away, never allowed a slight to be thrown on the use of

means, but on the contrary honoured His own sacraments, revered His Father's sanctuary, conversed with God through the medium of holy duties; and whenever He had any "mighty work," connected with the fulfilment of His mission, spent whole nights upon the cold mountains in silent communion with His Father. And will you, my brethren, who are the heirs of shame, the subjects of wrath, the sport and prey of every power of darkness, be less anxious than your Master was, to avail yourselves of all those outward means, by which the soul may converse with God, and attain to a better knowledge of His will?

In reference to the solemn ordinance, in which some among us are about to participate, must we ask—are the two sacraments too many, that you are content to observe but one? Is the way to heaven so smooth and easy, that when Christ offers you an arm to lean upon, you can afford to walk without it? Brethren, we must—we cannot help but stand in doubt of those, whose systematic neglect of our second sacrament is tantamount to a declaration—"I think God has given us one means of grace too many, one more than my spiritual necessities require. My vivid faith needs not these outward symbols; my full and satisfied soul wants not this spiritual food. I can love my Saviour while I dishonour Him; I can be saved by His dying merits, though I refuse to comply with His dying wish. I can serve my God, and yet slight Him; I can adore, and still disobey."

Brethren, we would not be misunderstood upon this subject. We are cast upon days, when the utmost precision and explicitness are demanded of us, whenever we touch upon that department of God's truth, which fixes the proper value and place of the Christian sacraments. That there are two prevalent and exactly opposite errors upon this subject, none can fail to have observed; the one investing these sacraments with some priestly or material charm, without regard to the state of the recipient's own mind; the other degrading them to the level of mere commemorative rites, as pledges to the Church and to one another of our belief in a common faith, and our participation of a common hope. We will not stay to discuss which of these two views be the more injurious to man, and the most dishonours God; suffice it, that in obedience to that law, by which the progress of error is for the most part governed, the one of these extremes has become the parent of the other. Good and holy men have

been found to embrace either of them, according as, from the fashion of their own minds, or from the bias of their early habits, they have become impregnated with a pious aversion from its opposite; while, as a natural consequence, all contrive to find a lower deep of extravagance and error than their own, in order to prove that they have discovered a happy medium for themselves.

Of course, we cannot pretend to go into this question to-day, though allusion to it is naturally suggested by that practical inconsistency, which meets us on every sacramental Sabbath, in three-fourths at least, of a congregation, not professedly unprepared for Christ's table in heaven, yet unwilling or unready to sit down at Christ's table on earth.

Deferring, however, to some future opportunity, a full developement of my views on this most important feature of our Gospel system, I would earnestly press upon all, whether communicants or not, two conclusions, which I believe every prayerful student of his Bible will find to be a necessary part of the truth of God. The first is, that through the medium or instrumentality of sacraments, spiritual benefits are communicated to the soul, which they who voluntarily neglect these sacraments, can have no scriptural hope of obtaining in any other way. The second conclusion is, that the measure or degree of benefit to be derived from the use of ordinances, depends not on the ordinance, nor on him who according to the will of God administers the ordinance, but upon the state of our own minds, and the purposes of our own hearts, at the time we receive the ordinance.

Between these two limits of truth, we feel no hesitation in making our invitation general—"Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden." For whilst the first conclusion would send the serious-minded and earnest non-communicant to reflect on the impiety of setting lightly by the appointed helps and means of Heaven, the second would remind others on what condition only they could with safety or with profit approach the table of the Lord. To the man who gives to the state of his soul no serious thought, whose shoulders bear no yoke, and whose heart sends up no prayer, our subject says but little; but to others it says—See how mercifully considerate of your dan-

gers, "your temptations, your weaknesses and your wants, hath God your Saviour been, in that "to the end that ye should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits, which by His precious blood-shedding He hath obtained to us, He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death, to our great and endless comfort." Jesus saw the danger we were in, lest in running the race which was set before us, we should "be weary and faint in our minds;" and therefore, in order to set us forward on our way, to refresh us when we are weary, and to revive us when we are faint, He invites us to sit down at His table, to enjoy the comfort of His spiritual presence, and to be strengthened with His spiritual food. Are ye, then, so full as to need no food? or do ye think it possible, that ye can "live by bread alone?" Hath God multiplied for you superfluous supports? or hath He set forth, with exaggerated and unneeded dangers, the difficulties of the Christian life? If not, accept the proffered grace of Christ; lean on the arm of God. "His rod and His staff" will alike "comfort you;" neither will you find one step too many on the ladder, by which you must climb to heaven.

But do not approach this holy feast, "not having on the wedding garment" of an honest, earnest, and undissembling heart. "Bring no more the vain oblation" of a service divided equally, you may think, between God and the world, but of which the world has by far the greater share. But draw nigh "with a true penitent heart," with a humble and believing heart, with a sincere and upright purpose of devoting the rest of your days to God, to souls, to holiness and to heaven. And then, with all your imperfections, with all your infirmities, with all your acknowledged unworthiness of privileges so high and so exalted, we would yet, as Christ's ambassadors and in Christ's name, say unto you—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; only take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

WAITING UPON GOD.

A SERMON,

BY THE HON. AND REV. H. MONTAGU VILLIERS, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BLOOMSBURY, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
MARCH 2, 1815.

"Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors. For, whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favours of the Lord."—Proverbs viii. 34, 35.

DEAR brethren, profession without principle is worthless. Every-day Christianity is that which we require. He who is not an every-day Christian, is no Christian at all. And yet there are many persons, who are what may be termed Sunday Christians; who have no real love of God, who do not feel that "to them to live is Christ," who find that they can live without Christ from week to week, whose hearts and affections are not set upon spiritual things—who deceive themselves. They may be willing listeners, but they are no more; they may be curious inquirers, but they are no children of God.

Now the text which I have selected this evening, gives us, first of all, the characteristics of an every-day Christian; and it sets before us, secondly, his reward.

May God, by His Holy Spirit, be present; and may that Spirit "take of the things which are Jesus's, and show them unto us," for the Lord Christ's sake!

I. First, then, the characteristics. They seem to be threefold. They "hear" Christ; they "watch daily at the gates" of Christ; and they "wait at the posts of the doors" of Christ. Therefore, they are hearers—watchers—waiters for Christ.

1. Now if we were to limit ourselves to the mere wording of the first portion of the text, we might say that all of you are "hearers;" and therefore, that all of you are Christians. But alas! my brethren, it is not so. Many hear—and do not hear. Many a time does our Lord himself refer to those, "who have ears, and yet hear not." For "hearing" is something more than "the hearing of the ear;" it implies a profitable hearing; and there are many of you, who do not profit by hearing. The reasons of this are in many cases very plain. You come to hear, but you do not come to learn; you come to hear, but you have no desire to practise; you come to hear, but you do

not care for profit. And the consequence is, that you come fresh from all the cares of the world. It is very likely, that the last book you shut, before you left your home to come to the house of God to-night, was some book which touched upon your money affairs, or which referred simply to the business of time; and then you expect at once to be able to turn your thoughts to heavenly things; but you find, that the Word "does not profit you." For, however the seed may be sown, there will come up the thorns and briars, and you will find that the cares of this life will "choke the Word." You will pass your two hours in the house of God, and you will return again, simply thinking of the things of time.

Others there are, who come hither with unclean hearts. If they are not living in the practice of gross ungodliness, they are at least oftentimes indulging in the thoughts of ungodliness. And therefore they set up for themselves a barrier to the profitable hearing of the Word of God. You will remember, the apostle James gives this advice: "Lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls."

If you really wish to receive good by attending at the house of God, there must be a desire to profit. I do not say, that at times the Lord is not "found of them who seek Him not;" but I am sure, that you are tempting God, if you come to His house and do not seek to profit. The spirit in which you ought to come, is that of Cornelius, recorded in the tenth chapter of the Acts: "Now therefore are we all here present before God," (remembering thus in whose house you are,) "to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." You must come, then, with a desire to "hear;" not wishing to have your ears tickled, but "desiring the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." You must come, at the same time, with a lively faith; for we are

taught, that the reason why the Word preached did not profit some, was its "not being mixed with faith in them that heard."

2. But the second characteristic which is given here, is that they are watchers: "watching daily at My gates."

This implies frequency: "watching daily." Not as some, who are able to spend every evening in the week in idleness, or, to say the least, in that which does not really profit, and that which they are not compelled by their business and particular calling in life to attend to, but who declare that they can never find time to learn any thing more of the Word of God; who can never find it convenient, to attend a week-day service. The Christian, whenever he can find the time, *does* find the time; for he "watches daily."

But it implies not only frequency but also, I think, perseverance. Not turning aside, like some, and rejecting the ministry, or refusing the truth, because it is not palatable. There are many, who act thus; they hear what God requires, and they do not like it, and therefore they will not do it. This we find was the conduct of some, of whom we read in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel; they said, "This is a hard saying," and "from that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." But those who will not follow with the Lord in this world, will not follow Him to His throne in the world to come.

"Watching daily at My gates." There is, I grant, much self-denial implied in this characteristic of the Christian; but we cannot be Christians, except we are prepared for self-denial. Thus, you will remember, our Lord says in the sixteenth of St. Matthew, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." This is what you must do, if you come here after Christ, and wish to be His followers. It implies, I know, much personal trouble, but the crown is worth it; and the reward must be ours, if we endure "to the end." We have no right, therefore, to grudge the personal trouble.

It requires much self-abasement. There are many, who will take the trouble to fight a battle, who will not take the trouble to stoop and abase themselves. There are many, who are not prepared to humble themselves before Christ; they cannot overcome righteous self. They will confess much about sinful self, and declare

that they are very sorry for sinful flesh; but tell them they are self-righteous, and they will not own that—though the very denial proves the truth of the accusation.

"Watching" implies also a certain degree of anxiety: the sort of feeling, that a person has who is looking from the top of a hill with the expectation of seeing some one coming from a distance. He strains his eyes, he stretches forth his neck, in order that he may reach as far as he possibly can, to catch the very first glimpse of his expected friend. Such will be the attention of a real Christian watcher. He is saying—"Let me find Jesus; let me catch but a glimpse of Him." He complains of every sermon, in which he cannot find Jesus prominently set forth; he finds no comfort in an ordinance, which does not speak or show forth Christ. This is the state of mind of the real every-day Christian, who is "watching daily at the gates" of the Lord.

3. The third characteristic set forth here is, "waiting at the posts of His doors." That is to say, he will attend those places, and frequently attend too, where Christ is expected. We have perhaps a fair illustration of this in the second chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, where there is an account given us of Simeon. He was "a man just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him; and it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ;" therefore he knew that he should see Him, but he had to wait patiently for Him; and what was it, that he did? Being anxious to find Him, we are told that "he came by the Spirit into the temple." Here it was, that the Saviour was to appear; and here it is, that the Christian will be—in the temple of the Lord, waiting for the Lord Jesus Christ. He will be regular in attending the ordinances, which set forth Jesus Christ. Not as some, who will come to the Lord's Supper, (which most plainly preaches by signs, setting forth the Lord Jesus "evidently crucified,") on Christmas Day, and Easter Day, and Trinity Sunday; but wherever this ordinance is, whenever they have an opportunity of seeing the Lord, they will not be weary of seeing Him, but will "wait at His doors." They will gladly come there, to catch a glimpse of the Redeemer.

They will be often in prayer: not only in the Lord's house on the Sabbath, but in their families; and even when they

are meeting for social intercourse, they will not think it wrong, or below their Christian condition, to summon all, before the party may separate, to read together a portion of God's Word and unite in prayer. They will also be as careful and diligent in secret prayer, as they are in prayer before other persons. They will take pleasure in meditating on the Saviour, and in reading the Word; "searching the Scriptures daily."

These I believe to be infallible characteristics of an every-day Christian. He "hears," and profitably hears; he "watches daily;" and patiently and constantly he "waits at the posts of the doors" of the Lord.

II. Such a man will never lose his reward. The text acts this before us; and it is the second point, to which I wish to direct your attention. First it is stated of him, that he is "blessed;" then we are told, that he shall "find" Christ; further, that so finding, he "finds life;" and then, that he "shall obtain favour of the Lord." But we may content ourselves with the two last considerations.

1. He "finds life." If you turn to the language of the apostle John, in the fifth chapter of his first epistle, you read, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." Finding Christ, therefore, must be finding life. This was so valued by the apostle Paul, that he declares in the epistle to the Philippians, that he "counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord;" "pressing toward the Mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

"Finding life," or finding Christ, implies pardon. If we have eternal life, we have pardon. So it was with the poor palsied man, who was brought into the presence of Jesus. He came there in the spirit of one, that wished to hear, desired to profit, had real faith in Him; and the Lord declared to him, that he might be of good cheer, for his sins were forgiven him. He found Christ, and therefore found pardon. And let us remember, that except there be pardon, there cannot be real spiritual life. Thus we read in the thirty-third of Ezekiel—"If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?" To have sin unpardoned, and yet to have spiritual life, is impossible.

With pardon we shall also have peace. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is when we have found this peace, that we can truly be said to live. We have entered then into a spiritual atmosphere, in which we breathe freely; we find ourselves really enjoying the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, we may add, that we have what the Scripture emphatically calls "joy and peace in believing." It is a joy, of which the world knows nothing; it is a joy, which words cannot describe; the apostle declares, that it is "joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

In one word, we then have eternal life. For Jesus says—"Because I live, ye shall live also."

2. Once more: the reward consists of the favour of God. He shall "obtain favour of the Lord." That favour which "is better than" any "life" in this world. It is better, because it is enduring. With God "there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" whom He loves "He loves unto the end;" and the Lesson of this evening's service [Philippians i.] tells us, that He who is the author, will also be the finisher of our faith. It is this favour, which supports the poor sinner in the time of his trouble. Thus we are told in the prophecies of Micah—"I will bear the indignation of the Lord;" and why is it, that he is enabled to bear it? It is because he has full confidence, that the Lord will "plead his cause, execute judgment for him, and bring him forth to the light, and he shall behold His righteousness." "The Lord will be a light unto him."

Dear brethren, when you come to the house of God in this spirit, I do not hesitate to say, that a blessing will follow. You shall "hear" the Word with profit to your own soul; the minister himself may be perfectly ignorant of your state of mind, but God will direct him; God will carry the message to your troubled spirit; God himself will be your teacher; and when you may be little expecting it, still there shall be a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." Your "watching" shall not be without its blessing; for, both for time and for eternity, there is the comfortable promise—"blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching." Your "waiting" shall not be in vain; you shall experience the same answer, that was given to the Syrophenician woman; your faith shall be acknow-

ledged, and you shall have that which you require.

There are one or two practical lessons from this subject, to which I should like to draw your attention.

Though you may be a hearer, a watcher, a waiter upon Christ; though, therefore, you are a true, an every-day Christian; you must expect your trials. But so far from mourning over your trials, especially those which come upon you for religion's sake, you ought to rejoice when they come. For you will find, that they will prove your faith; they will prove that your hearing is not that of curiosity, but of profit; that you are not merely a casual attendant, but a daily watcher for the Lord, to see what He shall say, and what message He has to you. They will prove to you, therefore, your faith in Him. They will prove also the truth of your love; for the man that loves the Lord, will be contented to have whatever the Lord shall send. Whether it be prosperity or whether it be adversity, as a lover of God you will say with the psalmist, "I will bless the Lord at all times." Yea, and to those who are bearing these religious trials, there are special promises given in the Word of God: as in the sixth chapter of St. Luke—"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy." Oh! then, if there are any of you, who find yourselves attacked—may I not say persecuted?—by your own families, by your parents, your brothers, your sisters, because you are anxious hearers, and daily watchers, and patient waiters—every-day Christians—rather rejoice that the Lord permits this. "Rejoice ye, and leap for joy; for behold, your reward is great in heaven." As the apostle Peter tells us, we ought to "count it all joy," that we are considered worthy to suffer for the Lord's sake.

Do not, then, be surprised either at the number or the degree of your trials. Religion may cost you much, but the world would cost you more; religion may cost you some trials here, but the world would cost your soul. Therefore, be willing to pay the price of serving God here. Do not doubt that God will help you; you shall have help in proportion to your trials. And remember, that if there is strength in proportion, there are promises

of reward in great disproportion. For what can we do, to be compared with the joys which God has in store for those, who love Him in sincerity and truth? It is not that we can obtain those joys by our own strength or merit; they are disproportioned to any thing we can possibly do; and yet they are in proportion to the price paid for us in the precious blood-shedding of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Think how much man will part with for life. Look at the merchant: how he will part with his time, his health, and every thing, for success on earth. And shall *we* not be willing to part with our worldly things for eternal life? We hear of the sick man parting with limb after limb, that still he may live a little longer upon earth; and shall *we* not part with our besetting sin, and come with pure hearts, seeking to know Christ, that we may live for Christ, and be with Christ hereafter?

Brethren, if it is so, that you come in such a spirit as this, I am sure the Word will profit you. I doubt very much, whether there will be many cases in which the Word will profit, except you come in the spirit of faith, with an anxious desire to hear, to learn, to do, the Word of God. But at the same time I would not venture to discourage any one of you, in attending at the house of God; for we are told of men being "begotten again by that Word." I am speaking of that which you have a right to expect, not that which God in sovereignty may be pleased to perform; God in sovereignty may cause any one of you to be born again this night, who may have attended here perhaps for the first time; but the promise in the text is to profitable hearers, daily watchers, and patient waiters. It is true, it is only to be expected, when we come in the spirit of prayer and of faith; yet look to Him, come and "taste and see that the Lord is good," come though now your appetite for heavenly food may not be keen; and your spiritual health may improve, your appetite may increase, and you may come hungering and thirsting, and obtain the blessing; for such "shall be filled."

Let me now turn to my younger brethren, and address a few words to them. They have heard to-day, that a Confirmation will speedily be held, and that instruction will in the meantime be given here, to enable them, in a proper frame of mind, to take upon themselves their bap-

tismal vows, and openly confess their Saviour in the sight of the whole world. Now let me entreat every one of them, and especially young men, to consider very seriously whether it is not their bounden duty, to come to this ordinance. Let me urge all who have not been confirmed, to attend our weekly lectures, which will be devoted to the subject; let us again and again be speaking to one another of the truths, which may be "to the saving of the soul." Let us come, that we may pray together, that we may talk together, that we may grow together in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And then, young as you are, you shall find that God does not consider you too young to serve Him; and that He has given special promises to you—"Those that seek Me early, shall find Me." Remember, the text declares, that if you do find Christ, you "find life;" and sure I am, that although there may be some who may ridicule you for coming boldly forward in the cause of your God, if you once "find life," you will be among those who are truly every-day Christians. You will be among those, who having begun young, will not depart from the right way; remaining profitable hearers, daily watchers, and patient waiters.

If you think that you have tried this, and have not hitherto profited as you could desire, still I say persevere. God's Word is true—"Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." God has "never said, Seek ye Me in vain." If you feel that you have waited, and have found nothing, still wait on. "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." If you feel that you have watched, and nevertheless sleep has again and again come over you, and you have fallen away, rouse up from this state; "awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Fear not; watch on; you shall obtain reward at the last.

But there must be some here, to whom I cannot speak these words of blessed encouragement. I mean such persons, as are hearers indeed, but careless and unmindful hearers; who are sleepy watchers, that talk of watching, but are asleep at their posts; who talk of waiting, but there is no patient endurance in them. Oh!

there is no blessing, indeed, to you. On the contrary I believe, that the more you hear, the worse you are; the more you pretend to watch, the more your eyelids are bowed down by sleep; the more you profess to wait, the more Satan is drawing you to himself. Oh! take heed, my brethren, lest after having heard the Gospel, you be amongst those who are neglecters of "so great salvation;" take heed lest there should be one amongst your number, whom God "gives over to a reprobate mind." It is awful to think how many hearts there are, that become like the road which is travelled over again and again; who become what has been well expressed by the term *Gospel-hardened*. The Gospel is preached, and it makes no impression; their hearts are seared; they live hearers, and they die hearers—and they die eternally.

Think, my brethren, whether you are in this condition. Ask yourselves what profit has come to your souls to-night. Ask yourselves, whether you have any real anxiety—any stretching forth the neck to catch some glimpse of the Saviour, and to receive some truth into your heart, which may make you happy here and hereafter. And if it should not be so, if you are in fact trifling with your souls and with eternity, and have come hither careless and are living careless, and despisers of the Lord, then I pray you, brethren, solemnise those hearts of yours, check those wandering thoughts, bring down that foolish scoffing smile. Oh! think now that you are in the house of God, that for what you are hearing you must give an account to God; and ask yourselves how you are ready to stand before God. Remember, too, it is not the asking only; there is an answer to be given to the question. And that answer, though the lip moves not, the heart is prompting; it is in your mind, and God sees it there; God records it; it is down in His book.

Oh! think, then; are you in death, or life? Look once more to the language of the text; and God by His Spirit change your unconverted heart, teach you of Jesus Christ, and send you away with the blessing of having found Him. Then you shall lie down in sleep, and if you wake no more, no matter; for if to-night you have found Jesus, you have found eternal life.

A SERMON, BY THE REV. HUGH HUGHES, B.D.

PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CLERKENWELL, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
FEB. 16, 1845.

"Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land: and a certain man of Bethlehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi."—Ruth i. 1, 2.

NAOMI, whose instructive life we propose now to consider, is the first female mentioned in the interesting book of Ruth. That book is to be regarded as an appendix to the book of Judges, and not a continuation of the Scripture history. It relates events, which according to the best chronologers took place long before the times of Samson or Jephthah, the periods referred to in our last and two preceding discourses. But as it is placed in our Bibles between the books of Judges and Samuel, I have followed that order in laying its contents before you, as more simple and less perplexing to the memory and comprehension of the generality of hearers. There is also a fitness in appending its history to, rather than inserting it in, that of the Judges, from the circumstance of its concluding with the genealogy of David, whose celebrated life is narrated in the succeeding books of Samuel. It was written, according to some by Ezra, according to others by Hezekiah, but most probably by Samuel, or the author of the books called after his name; and it is a very important record, as exhibiting the descent of David, who, according to the flesh, was forefather to the Messiah, from Judah the fourth son of Jacob, and demonstrating the fulfilment of the remarkable prophecy of dying Israel—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be."

While Josephus would refer the events recorded in this book to the times when Eli judged Israel, and others to those of Gideon or Abimelech, and others to a date as early as that of Ehud, who delivered Israel by killing Eglon, king of Moab; the most probable period of their occurrence, according to the generally approved chronology, is the time of Shamgar, who repelled the incursions of the Philistines, or just before the memorable defeat and death of Sisera by Deborah, Barak and Jael. It was a period of great desolation for the chosen race. Their sin against God had converted the land, which once flowed with milk and honey, into a dry and barren land, and rendered it no longer

desirable, as a country to dwell in. The judgment of Jehovah had fallen upon His backsliding people, and had either caused the harvests to fail, or permitted the Philistines or the Canaanites to plunder the country, and appropriate to themselves its fruitful produce; and the consequence was a sore "famine in the land," which induced some of the inhabitants to quit their homes, and to seek sustenance for themselves, by settling among foreign and heathen nations. Among these emigrants was a man of Bethlehem-judah, Elimelech by name, with his wife Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. There is a prophetic signification in the names of these parents and their children. The names of most of the remarkable characters recorded in the Scripture, (and that appears to have been the case with the names of the father *Elimelech*, *God is my king*, and of the mother *Naomi*, *pleasant, happy*;) indicate Divine favour and worldly prosperity. The names of the sons, *Mahlon*, signifying *weakness, sickness*, and *Chilion*, meaning *consumption, decay*, imply the very reverse of health and comfort. Perhaps they were respectively given them by the suggestion of the Holy Spirit, to indicate the mournful contrast between the once flourishing condition of the hopeful pair, and the subsequent sore adversity and blighting desolation of the family. The father is supposed to have been brother to that Salmon, who married Rahab, and who was the son of Nahshon, a prince of the children of Judah; and Naomi is supposed to have been his niece; and consequently they were nearly connected with the highest families of the land. How greatly, then, must they have been reduced in circumstances, when they were compelled by the dreaded want of the necessities of life, to quit their homes and seek a more comfortable subsistence in a foreign land! How fleeting often is worldly prosperity! How frail is high connexion, when the Almighty frowns! How perishable is worldly wealth, when the Disposer of all withdraws His blessing! How weak are all earthly supports, when He dries up the streams of consolation! "Let not the

wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, saith the Lord."

The visitation of famine, which at this time afflicted the land of Canaan, had been distinctly declared in the law of Moses, to be one of the judgments of God against the workers of iniquity. "If ye will not hearken unto Me," saith Jehovah in Leviticus (xxvi. 14, 20.) "and will not do all My commandments; your strength shall be spent in vain, for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits." It was one of the arrows, which He selected out of His quiver, for the punishment of David's sin in numbering the people of Israel; and so dreadful was the havoc which it was known to make, when let fly upon a land, that the distressed and perplexed monarch deprecated it as much as the edge of the all-conquering sword, and preferred to either, that the plague should be let loose upon the length and breadth of his kingdom. It was a weapon so keen and penetrating, and all-pervading, that it reached even the vicinity and village of Bethlehem, the very meaning of which is the *house of bread*. Not only was the land, which once "flowed with milk and honey," become generally barren by reason of the sin of its inhabitants, but even its most fruitful region, and best furnished storehouse, had been exhausted. Let our own nation beware of provoking the wrath of God, by backsliding from the way of His commandments. Like the Lascites of old, the lot of our inheritance has been cast in pleasant places. We have been blessed with a prosperity, beyond any people on the face of the earth. Victory in war has been ours. Pre-eminence in commerce, literature, and arts, has been ours. The possession of civil liberty and religious freedom has been ours. Exemption from the sword, the pestilence, and the famine, for ages, has been ours. And these blessings, with insignificant exceptions, have abounded in our land, chiefly from the period, when we came out of the bondage of Popish superstition, galling as the bondage of Egypt, and when we passed into the purer atmosphere of reformed and Protestant Christianity. If we return to the idolatries of a corrupt faith, if we backslide to the wretched darkness of the middle ages, from which our Moseses and Joshuas, and Baraks, and Samsons, the immortal champions of our reformation, emancipated us, then let us prepare for the pestilence, and the sword,

and the famine, which were the almost inseparable concomitants of those wretched times. Let us not vainly look at our present prosperity, and confide in our position as at the head of all nations, and thinking such apprehensions groundless, imagine our mountain to be so strong, that it cannot be moved at any time. Be assured, that the Gospel alone is the ark of our strength; and if we despise it, or substitute hay and stubble for its pure gold, the glory will depart from our country. Not only is there an almost necessary connexion between national purity and vitality of religion, and national enjoyment of temporal prosperity, but we may most reasonably fear the infliction of Divine judgments for the disregard of such dear-bought blessings; and flourishing as we may be now, we shall find Him able, and ready, as of old, to vindicate the truth of His Word—"He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the waterspings into a dry ground; a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein."

We may well suppose, that Naomi felt as a great affliction, the necessity of quitting the land of her birth, and of going into a foreign and heathen country. This necessity was probably imposed by the will of her husband, whom she could not disobey, rather than by an immediate and absolute pressure of circumstances; for we infer, from the subsequent part of the history, that Elimelech was influenced, rather by the fear, than by the actual experience of destitution. He seems to have lost all confidence in the resources of the promised land, and he hastened prematurely away into a region of heathens and idolaters. We may imagine Naomi to have remonstrated against this rashness and precipitation. There was no precedent for such a step. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob had, indeed, left Canaan for Egypt, under the pressure of famine, but they were destined to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth, without any fixed habitations. It was not so with their descendants, when Jehovah had driven out the Canaanites before them, and given them their land for an everlasting possession. *There* therefore it was their duty to abide, as long as they were not drawn away by irresistible violence, or uncontrollable necessity. *There* was the ark of the covenant, *there* was the tabernacle of worship, *there* was to be expected the fulfilment of the great and glorious promises made to the chosen race. To quit the scene of so many solemn injunctions, sacred associations, and bright anticipations, was like going out of the true Church and apostatizing from

the God of Israel. When Elimelech determined upon the step, though Naomi did not feel it to be her duty to refuse accompanying her husband and her sons, yet her tender and pious heart might well be apprehensive of the worst consequences; for they were about to go, not from one tribe to another, not from one part of her native country to another province of the same, but from the land of Canaan to the land of the Moabites, from the inheritance of the Israelites to the habitation of heathens, from the place where Jehovah had fixed His residence and name, to a region of abominable superstitions and idolatries. When men, from motives of gain or advancement in the world, or from distrustful fears of poverty and distress, quit the Church of God, and depart from the communion of the saints, and the society of the pious, and associate with godless companions, and link themselves with worldly and unprincipled connexions, let them fear the worst from their short-sighted wisdom; and let them be assured that they will one day be compelled in bitterness to confess—"I have sinned, and perverted that which is right, and it profited me nothing."

The gloomiest forebodings that Naomi might have entertained, were mournfully realized, as we shall learn, if we pursue the history of the family, into the land of Moab. It was a trial to a pious mind, to be separated from the communion of the people of God, and to be compelled to hold intercourse with a people, who worshipped false gods. It was a trial to any mind, to quit country, friends, connexions, and scenes interwoven with the dearest recollections and associations of the heart and memory. But although compelled to leave the land of her birth, yet it may be said that she carried her home with her. It is not a house, or a street, or a locality, that constitutes home. It is the presence of those, whom we value most on earth. Naomi, though in a strange land, enjoyed the company of such; for she had a husband and two sons, and though in the midst of idolaters, she could with these dear members of her family, lift up her heart in prayer and praise to the throne of the true God. The little family was a little Church in the desert of Sin, a little spiritual oasis in the wild and desolate wilderness; and its several members must, in consequence, of this spiritual isolation, have become more than ever all in all to one another. How dear to Naomi's heart in such a case, must have been the lives of her husband and her two sons! How incalculably enhanced in value, if possible, beyond what they had been when living

among her countrymen, and co-religionists! Oh! if there was a prayer that escaped her lips for temporal blessings, more fervent, more earnest, more important than another, it was that those precious lives might be spared. If there was a calamity which she deprecated beyond any other on earth, it was the departure of those beloved ones, before herself, into another world. But, alas! that which she would have most avoided overtook her; and she could say with Job in his affliction, "the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me." One of the small community, and that the chief staff of its support, is called away. "Elimelech, Naomi's husband died, and she was left with her two sons." We know not exactly how soon this took place, after the commencement of their residence in Moab. It does not appear to have been many years. It was, then, as we have already intimated, a very short-sighted wisdom in Elimelech, to leave his country, on account of a temporary pressure, and to forego the invaluable privileges of the commonwealth of Israel, for the sake of advancing his worldly interests. It would appear, that he died prematurely, and unexpectedly, and left his wife and children in a far worse condition, than when he left the land of Canaan. And is not his case a type of many in the present day? Under the pretence of providing for those that are dear unto him, but really from a spirit of discontent with his present inferior condition, and from an unhallowed ambition to attain a higher than Providence has allotted him, a man will devote himself to this world without reference to another, and in the keen and eager pursuit of wealth, make shipwreck of faith and good conscience, and, after all, gain not one of the objects he laboured to accomplish, but cause, by his reckless worldliness, many a pang to conscientious members of his family while living, and, being cut off in the midst of his career, and all his thoughts perishing, leave them suddenly without provision or protection, in a hard-hearted and un pitying world. "Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Naomi is now a widow: a condition which is set forth in Scripture as calling for peculiar compassion, and repeatedly represented as having attracted the espe-

cial commiseration of Jehovah; and of His most eminent servants. Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament recommend it to our considerate attention. Elijah was so moved with pity at the desolation of a widow of Sarepta, that he raised her son from death to life. Elisha was so moved with pity at the desolation of a widow of Shunam, that he performed the same office in her behalf. Jesus, who was greater than any prophet, felt a similar sympathy for the sad bereavement of a widow of Nain, when He met the funeral procession that was conveying the body of her son to its last earthly resting place. Addressing to her the touching consolation—"Weep not," and placing His hand upon the bier, He said—"Young man, I say unto thee arise. And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother." To regard the widow's affliction, is, by St. James, specified as an essential part of pure and undefiled religion. To have caused her heart to sing for joy, was Job's comfort in his deepest affliction. Yea, the Almighty himself has declared Himself to be her especial guardian, according to the words of the psalmist—"A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow, is God in His holy habitation." Naomi, then, was now reduced to a condition, which the Holy Ghost recognizes as peculiarly pitiable. It was aggravated by the circumstance of being far away from brothers, sisters, and dear relatives, among her own people. It was as yet, however, far from being inconsolable. She had two sons, who, if not already arrived, she hoped soon to see arrived, at man's estate. To them she turned her eyes with fond affection, as the pledges of her husband's love, and the dear tokens of departed happiness. To them she looked forward as the solace of her remaining life, and the props of her declining age. With them she hoped one day to return to Zion, and to appear again in the "amiable tabernacles of the Lord of Hosts." Them she loved to think she should one day behold, as the heads of flourishing houses in Israel. But, alas! she was doomed to disappointment in regard to them. Instead of keeping themselves aloof from the surrounding idolaters, and preparing, at the first opportunity, to revisit the homes of their fathers, and join the worshippers of Jehovah, they formed matrimonial connexions with the daughters of the land. "And they took them wives of the women of Moab; of whom the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth." This was, according to some, contrary to

the decree of God. It was certainly a practice discountenanced by the inspired writers, and disapproved of by pious parents in Israel. The corruption of the ante-diluvian Church, and the degeneracy of the ante-diluvian race, are ascribed to the intermarriage of "the sons of God" with "the daughters of men." Abraham made his servant swear a solemn oath that he would not "take a wife unto his son of the daughters of the Canaanites, but go for the purpose unto his own country and to his own kindred." Rebekah complained that "she was weary of her life, because of the daughters of Heth," whom Esau had married, and expressed a most earnest wish that Jacob would abstain from such alliances, and marry one of her own relatives. Samson's father and mother lamented their son's choice, when he declared his intention to marry a woman of Timnath, and regretfully remonstrated with him, saying—"Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" Deep, then, must have been the grief of the pious Naomi, to find her two sons, her only hope in the world, determined to unite themselves in marriage with two Gentile women, accustomed to Pagan worship, attached to a Pagan country, and possessed with Pagan prejudices, and Pagan predilections. The prospect presented by such an alliance, must have been gloomy in many ways. The hearts of her sons might become so linked with these foreign connexions, that they would never return to their native land; their souls might become so corrupted by so intimate a union with those, who had been brought up in the abominations of idolatry, that they would entirely forget their allegiance to the God of Israel. Oh! it was a sad contemplation, for a pious mother! But, alas! what other result was reasonably to have been expected, from the unwise step of their father, in taking up his residence among heathens, and consequently bringing his sons into the society of idolatrous women? Let parents beware of sacrificing the spiritual interests of their children to the hopes of worldly advancement, and remember that nothing can alter or invalidate the apostolic quotation—"Evil communications corrupt good manners;" nor the wise man's truthful declaration—"He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

Troubles upon troubles accumulated on the head of Naomi, as years passed away. It was sad, to leave her native land for a land of strangers. It was grievous, to

be surrounded by heathens and idolaters. It was dreadful, to be left a widow under such circumstances. It was a melancholy prospect for an Israelitish mother, to see both her sons connect themselves with Pagan families, which might have the effect of winning their hearts alike from their country and their God. But still she had hopes of them : she derived consolations from their presence ; they were in the land of the living ; they might prosper in the world ; they might hold fast their faith, in the midst of unfavourable associations ; they might, as better times returned, revisit Canaan, and spend the remainder of their days in the land of Judah, and within the commonwealth of Israel. But alas ! even this prospect was destined to be blighted. After the lapse of ten years from their arrival in Moab, or, perhaps, from their marriage, " Mahlon and Chilion died also, both of them ; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband." Wave after wave of affliction had broken over her before, and she had been able to sustain the shock ; but this stormy billow shattered her last earthly hopes, and overwhelmed her in the fathomless ocean of despair. Despair, we mean, of any chance of happiness or comfort in the land she dwelt in. Like Noah's dove, flying over the unbroken waste of waters, she could now discover not one green spot in Moab, whereon to rest the sole of her foot. What remained for her, then, but to betake herself to the country of her own kindred and her own people ?

It appears, however, that her amiable temper and fervent piety had won the deep attachment of the Moabitish women, who had married her sons. They would not allow her to commence her journey to her native land alone. They accompanied her, as it would appear, without thought of parting, to the extreme borders of their own country. And even there, both were very reluctant, and one of them absolutely refused, to separate from their beloved mother-in-law. When she, at last, counselled them to return, each to her own mother's house—when she pronounced upon them her most hearty benediction, and prayed that the Lord would deal kindly with them, as they had dealt kindly with the dead and her—when she expressed on their behalf the disinterested wish, that they might form more prosperous connexions than her own shortlived and afflicted sons had proved—when she sealed her undying affection for them, by the kiss of peace and farewell, she recalled the memory of their wedded love, opened afresh the fountains of their grief for their dear de-

parted ones, and, knit their hearts more closely than ever to the only living memorial of those they had lost. " And they lifted up their voice, and wept. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people." Naomi, though loth to part with them, remonstrated strongly against this resolution, on the ground of its temporal disadvantage to them. She endeavoured, in the most disinterested manner, to convince them that she saw no prospect of earthly prosperity for them in her own country, and among her own connexions. She lamented much the afflictive dispensation, which had caused their union with her sons to issue so prematurely and so disastrously, but declared her opinion that, under the circumstances which it had pleased Providence to ordain, the most prudent step they could take was, to return to the land of their birth and the home of their childhood. It was a hard and perplexing case ; it was to make a choice between fond attachment and worldly wisdom, yea, more, between true religion and earthly comforts ; and we wonder not, that " they lifted up their voice and wept again."

The result, however, was different with the two daughters-in-law ; (which result we hope to consider at large in our next Sunday evening's discourse ;) Orpah being persuaded to return to her own people, and Ruth determining to cast in her lot with her mother-in-law, and to cleave to her and her nation. With the latter, Naomi proceeds to Bethlehem, and takes up her abode in the place of her former habitation. Her arrival after so long an absence, created a great sensation in the city. Her reduced circumstances, her bereaved condition, her altered mien, her faded beauty, increased the interest which her reappearance excited, and induced her old acquaintances to ask, with wonder and with pity—" Is this Naomi?" Is this she, whose person and prosperity once so happily corresponded with her name—the beautiful, the blessed one ? Is this the wife of the once affluent, but too ambitious Elimelech ? Is this she, whose personal attractions were universally admired, and whose benevolent heart and bountiful hand scattered blessings all around ? This stricken deer, this withered form, this destitute pilgrim, this desolate widow—is this Naomi ? ' Oh !' replied she, ' utter not again that word. It awakens too many sad remembrances in this sorrow-deluged heart. " Call me not Naomi." The bloom of former happiness is all gone, and nothing is left but the sere leaf. The rose is all withered, and nothing remains but

the hard and prickly thorn. "Call me Mara" now, which signifies bitterness; for very bitter is my unhappy lot. "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home empty." I went out with comparative comfort and with hope; but I return in desolation and despondency. I went out with a dear partner and two beloved sons; but they are all gone from the land of the living, and, behold, I am left alone. Why, then, pronounce a word, which recalls joys departed, never to return, of which the remembrance is now so bitter? "Why call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?"

1. Among the many lessons presented by this instructive history, learn, first, from the change in the circumstances of Naomi's husband, not to trust in the uncertain possessions of this world. You may now be wealthy and respectable among your neighbours and acquaintances, a few years or months may reduce you to a condition of discomfort, if not of poverty and indigence. Remember, it is not the contriving head, or the toiling hand, but it is the Lord, that maketh rich and maketh poor, and lifteth up and casteth down. Let this remind you of the duty, while ye have this world's goods, to spend them in His service and to His glory; and gratefully to say, with one of old—"All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee."

2. Learn from the consequences of the step taken by Elimelech, the peril of discontentedness and impatience under adverse circumstances. Should riches make themselves wings, and poverty threaten to be your lot, beware of rashly changing your habits and connexions. Especially beware of seeking to mend your fortune, by associating with the unprincipled and the irreligious. However gloomy the prospect, and however threatening the storm, never think of having recourse to forbidden methods of escape; but rather, hold ye more fast than ever your confidence in the promised aid of a gracious God, exclaiming with the psalmist—"My soul trusteth in Thee: yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."

3. Ye that are parents, surrounded with a family of children, learn from this history, to reflect how soon those children may be taken away. And oh! strive and pray, above all things, that they may be the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. Though it may be hard, to see them sinking and withering away before your eyes, like a flower nipped in its

early bloom, yet how will your heart be lightened, and your sorrow soothed by the thought, that they are fallen asleep in Jesus, and by the sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life! Bring them to Christ while living, and your bereaved hearts shall have the unspeakable comfort of saying of them when departed, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

4. Learn from Naomi's trials, the beneficial effects of affliction; and from her resolution to return to her native land—the land of Jehovah's worship—that the only true refuge in affliction is pure and undefiled religion. All her chief calamities befell her, while in the land of idolatry and darkness. All her remaining hope lay in quitting the melancholy scene, and revisiting the neighbourhood of Zion. She felt, as she confessed on her return to Bethlehem, that it was the Lord, who had in those dispensations testified against her, and the Almighty, who had afflicted her. God had been contending with her, to bring her to a more excellent way; even as by severe discipline He compelled the prodigal to "arise, and go to his father." Perhaps, if her husband and sons had not died, she would have spent her days in the land of Moab, and become accustomed and attached to the society of those, who lived without God in the world. And so it may be with some of you, whom God visits with His chastising rod. You are in danger of continuing in a state of alienation, and of perishing in your sins; and therefore God, in love to your souls, takes away the desire of your eyes with a stroke, and bereaves you of children or partner, or sends poverty or pain, to bring you to reflection, to repentance, to a reconsideration of your ways, and to a return unto, the Lord your God. My afflicted friends, seek not to defeat the gracious and merciful design. Look not for relief or consolation in your state of distance and rebellion; but return unto the spiritual Zion; repair to the sanctuary of Judah; cast yourself at the feet of Shiloh there, and say—

"Jesu, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy mercy fly;
While the raging bulwows roll,
While the tempest still is high.

Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave I ah! leave me not alone!
Still support and comfort me!

All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing!"

REAL CHRISTIANS, ABSOLVED FROM CONDEMNATION.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM CURLING, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
MARCH 2, 1845.

"There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans viii. 1.

THESE words fitly follow the conclusion of the apostle's argument, at the close of the previous chapter. In that, he had been deploring, as a Christian, the remaining corruption which, notwithstanding the conversion of his heart, he found to be in him. He wished, as one that loved God, and delighted in His law, to render to that law a perfect obedience. He tried, but he tried in vain. An adverse principle, the principle of depravity, wrought within him, and presented to his efforts a constant and insuperable hindrance. "To will," he says, "is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not." "I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." This discovery awakened in his soul the most painful sensations. He wished for full liberty; he panted for a complete emancipation from the power of evil; but he felt himself held back from that state of desired enjoyment, by the tyrannical influence of a vicious propensity, which, in despite of the heavenly desires of his renewed mind, had a lodgment within him. So he cries out, like one imprisoned, and ready to faint, because he does not behold a present help sufficient to accomplish his rescue from sin—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" that is, from this mass of sin, which like a dead carcase, so corrupt, so offensive, I carry about with me, unable to get rid of it.

Thus far we have his disquietude; a disquietude which exhibits, in its cause, the imperfection of the holiest of God's people here upon earth, the constant

struggle between good and evil which the righteous experience, and the reason why it is said that "they who are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." But if he is oppressed by the sight and sense of sin, he soon finds a way of relief. In the grace of God, succouring and delivering from the dominion of sin, enabling God's people to persevere, and, at length, to triumph over it, he has a complete outlet for all his grief and all his anxiety. Accordingly, he ceases to mourn, and he breaks forth into praise. "I thank God," he says, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." "I thank Him, because by the death and merit of 'His dear Son,' He has made a provision for the pardon of my sins, for my present sanctification, and my everlasting happiness. I thank Him, because He hath found for me, in Christ, a shelter where, sinner as I am, I may safely abide, without fear of the storm of His displeasure, and hold up my head with confidence and joy." Thus did the apostle end the previous chapter; and the words of our text do most appropriately follow, as the opening of one of the most consolatory and finest parts of the whole Bible—"There is, then, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

These words are worthy of being heard and studied by every human creature. May God make them profitable to our souls, whilst we consider, first, the persons described; secondly, the blessing that is said to belong to them; and, thirdly, the evidence of their being in possession of it.

I. First, the persons described: they are those, who are "in Christ Jesus."

There is no phrase more frequently

employed in the New Testament to denote a real Christian, than this. It is a singular phrase, and has its derivation from the union that exists by faith between Christ and His followers. Those who believe in Him, are said to come into Him and the connection thus formed between penitent sinners upon earth and the object of their hope and trust in heaven, is likened to that which the members have with the head of the body, or the branches with the tree. Now we know, that a member may be attached to a body of which it is a part, and yet be lifeless. There may be no animation; disease may have paralyzed its powers, and excision may have become necessary. We know, that in a tree there may be many a branch, barren, dry, withered. And so with the Church of Christ, if you speak of that Church only as a visible community, composed of those who are joined to Christ by baptism and an outward profession. Christ emphatically declared, when He spoke of that earthly kingdom, which was to consist of all called Christians by the profession of the Christian faith, that numbers would be admitted into it, and become nominally His subjects, who, from the state of their hearts, would have no real and saving connection with Him. One parable says, that the "net" thrown into the sea far and wide by the Gospel fishermen, would gather of every kind—"bad" as well as "good." Another compares the Christian Church to a "field," in which the "tares" grow together with "the wheat" until "the time of harvest." And a third represents the Gospel as inviting men everywhere to "a feast," and as drawing large numbers of guests together; and then it proceeds to say, that hypocrisy and false religion would be found at last to have belonged to some even, of those who took their place at the Lord's table, and were reckoned amongst the number of His friends. From all which it is quite plain, that a man may be "in Christ" by profession, as a member of His Church, without belonging to Him. And so Christ declared: "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord," (speaking familiarly to Him, as if they were faithful and approved servants,) "have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, *I never knew you.*" "You preached, it is true, in

My name; you had outward gifts, and by means of them you did what you say; but, notwithstanding this, I never reckoned you amongst My servants; I never regarded either your persons or your actions with acceptance. Your outward deeds were fair, but your hearts were not right in My sight; corrupt motives, and wrong ends influenced your conduct. Religion was on your lips, but it was absent altogether from your souls. You, therefore, had never anything to do with Me; and I can have nothing to do with you now. "Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity." Oh! brethren, beware of deception, in the great matter of personal religion! It is an easy thing, to boast of our belonging to the Church, and of our having received within its pale the Sacramental Christian ordinances. But, recollect again, that belonging to the Church is not the same thing as belonging to Christ. We may have "the form of godliness, without the power thereof;" we may have "a name to live, whilst we are dead." We may be rigid observers of Church forms and Church ceremonies; and yet, if we are destitute of that grace which is alone the life of religion, we shall, like the Jews,—who vaunted of their temple and its service, while they wanted the spirit necessary to make them acceptable worshippers of "the Searcher of hearts,"—lose our expected place in the kingdom of heaven.

The phrase, then, "in Christ Jesus," means something more than the being a Christian by a baptismal admission to the communion of an outward, visible Church. It denotes that close and living fellowship, which exists between Christ and the truly believing members of His mystical body. It expresses that intimate relation, which the soul has to Christ, when by faith it apprehends Him, connects itself to Him, abides in Him, and lives upon Him. It is the mystery of religion; but it is also its reality. The Founder of our faith asserted this truth: "Abide in Me," He said to His disciples, "and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing." There, faith is spoken of as an uniting principle, connecting the soul, for its life and fruitfulness, with Christ. And the same senti-

ment is thus strongly expressed by St. Paul: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." And again: "Our life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory."

But, my brethren, there is, besides this general and very important sense of being "in Christ Jesus," a *peculiar* meaning attaching to those words, as they are used in the passage now before us. They represent Christ as a "refuge," in which believers take shelter from that "wrath of God," which naturally, by reason of sin, rests upon every man. The figure is borrowed, in all probability, from those cities of refuge, which were provided by Jewish law, for those who had committed manslaughter without malicious intent. The next of kin to the party whose life had been taken from him, was almost sure to pursue the "man-slayer;" and Scripture, therefore, speaks of him as "the avenger of blood." But these cities of refuge afforded an asylum, in which persons so circumstanced were protected from the vengeance that was directed against them. Whilst they were outside the city, the pursuer could take their blood; but as soon as they reached its gates and got within its walls, all danger was past; the adversary's hand could not touch them. And thus are they a beautiful and an exact representation of salvation by Christ Jesus. We are all sinners; and, as such, we are obnoxious to God's wrath. But God has provided a refuge; that refuge, His own "dear Son." The merit of His sacrifice, is the shelter, under which sinners may fly; and if they fly there, they shall be safe. We will explain this more fully presently; but here is the fact, which the words of the text express. They who are "in Christ Jesus," are in Him as the man was in the city of refuge, or as Noah was in the ark, or as a sheep is in the fold. Under a conviction of guilt, under a sense of danger, they have "fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them in the Gospel," and the justice of God pursues them no more. This is what we are to understand, by the phrase of being "in Christ Jesus."

The persons, then, spoken of, are true believers—those whom the Holy Spirit has convinced of sin; in whose hearts He

has awakened the inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" and who have been led by the same Spirit to seek salvation in that "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." They differ from the usual class of nominal Christians; for they hear of Christ without any movement of the soul towards Him. They know that He died for sin, and that He is the Saviour of all who put their trust in Him; but instead of trusting in Him, they trust in themselves. They think that because He died, they are able now, to work their own way, by their own deeds, to heaven. And hence you never find among such persons "godly sorrow," self-abasement, or spiritual anxiety. They rather smile at such things. But the persons referred to in the text are those who, by enlightenment of mind, have seen their real condition; they have discovered themselves to be sinners, sinners exposed to the impending wrath of Almighty God; and the discovery has roused the most painful apprehensions in their souls. Like "the man-slayer" under the law, they have seemed to hear with palpitating alarm, the footsteps of the avenger close behind. And under these feelings they have fled—they have "fled to the refuge," which the mercy of God provided, and the Spirit of God pointed out to them. All anxious to be delivered from the curse of a broken law, they have hurried onwards, allowing nothing to detain, nothing to divert them. Nor have they stayed their steps in their earnest pursuit of the great object, till they have found themselves lodged within that place where their salvation is secured.

We now pass on to consider more particularly concerning them—

II. In the second place, *the blessing which they enjoy*. The apostle says, that "there is no condemnation" for them; and this, because they "are in Christ Jesus." Now, brethren, if we bear this in mind, we are led to infer from it, that out of Christ Jesus there is "condemnation;" and this is a truth which Scripture everywhere proclaims. The Gospel revelation proceeds upon this fact, that sin has brought every man living under the condemning sentence of God's righteous law. It says, that "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" and that we are "by nature the children of wrath." Our own state, then, as we stand by ourselves, is one of imminent peril, yea, of certain ruin to our im-

mortal interests. God looks upon us as sinners, and deals with us as such. It is in vain for us to flatter ourselves, that we can ward off this impending anger, by throwing around our characters the supposed defence of natural moral virtues. God regards us as transgressors, because we have broken in Adam, and by our own misconduct, His holy law; and viewing us in that light, He cannot but inflict upon us sin's tremendous penalty. We may be quite sure, brethren, that we *must* suffer the penalty due to sin, if we stand in the state in which Adam left us, by merely considering the fact that Christ died to redeem us from it. If the first Adam had not involved us in ruin, the second Adam would not have appeared on the theatre of the world to effect our salvation. So that the state of every man, standing by himself before God, and out of the refuge appointed for sinners, is one of great awfulness. "He that hath the Son," saith St. John, "hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." These last are dreadful words; and how many are there in the world, how many attached to Christian Churches, to whom they are applicable! Christians by name, abound everywhere; but Christians by exercise of faith in Christ, by laying hold of Him, leaning on Him, and rejoicing in Him, are comparatively few. I fear, my dear brethren, that if examination were made amongst you, there would be found no inconsiderable number without a personal interest in Jesus Christ. And if you have not a personal interest in Him, then are you in the state I have before described. If you have no lot or part with Christ, you are without doubt under God's condemnation. You may be loved, smiled upon, and applauded, on natural grounds, by your sinful fellow creatures; but God is "angry" with you ~~every~~ day." You may be light-hearted, but that does not alter the case; it only makes it the more sad. Your being in danger of perishing, without being aware of it, shows how little you think of God, how little attention you pay to the condition of your immortal soul. Yes, brethren, you follow pleasure, though you love not God; though you put religion from you. You go into society, and there you are merry: you dance, and laugh, and sing—but is not this a sort of moral derangement? For what is your case? It is like that of a criminal condemned to die, and who knows not but

that he may die to-morrow—only there is this feature in your case worse than in his; that the death he is anticipating is that of the body, whilst yours is the death of the soul—the one a temporal loss, the other eternal. Now what would you think of a person lying under sentence of death, employing his time in joke, and sport, and merriment? You would be shocked at the man's unconcern at the awfulness of his situation. But, my brethren, in the light of eternity, that man's levity is not more unbecoming, not more irrational, than yours. You are sentenced to die by the great God who "can destroy both soul and body in hell." And yet, even whilst you are under that most dreadful sentence, and know not but that it may be executed upon you the very next hour, you take your part in the gaieties of life, and spend your time in frivolous amusements? Is this right? Can it be justified by reason any more than by religion? Think, brethren, think. A little reflection will show, that a gay life is not the life you ought to lead, whilst your soul is unpardoned. A state of melancholy, a state of grief is your fitting condition while the sentence of death hangs over you. Get that reversed by going to Christ—obtain pardon through the blood of the Lamb—and then your "sorrow" may well "be turned into joy."

This is the point which the text sets before us, as it respects the *Christian*. For him, there is "no condemnation;" he is "passed from death unto life." You recollect, that the former division of my subject represented him as being "in Christ Jesus;" and on *this* account it is, that there is "no condemnation" for him. Being "in Christ," God no longer regards him as standing alone. He views him as he is "*in Christ*," and not as he was in Adam. As one with Adam, he had Adam's guilt imputed to him: he was guilty, because Adam was guilty; condemned, because he was condemned. But now, being one with Christ by the power of faith, his condition is reversed. Now Christ's righteousness is imputed to him, just as Adam's guilt was imputed to him before. He is righteous, because Christ is righteous; and being righteous "in Christ," he is freed from condemnation. Now God loves him, smiles upon him, and blesses him, for the sake of Him, who has become his Saviour. Now God allows him to draw near to

Him, as to a Father, affectionately interested in all his concerns. He receives with delight his expressions of filial confidence; He accepts his services; He bears with his infirmities; He passes by his transgressions; and all through the merit, and on account of the mediation of His "dear Son." So that there is indeed "no condemnation." As St. Paul has said, in another place—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" And hence that apostle has also well expressed the happy condition of a believer, in these words: "Being justified by faith, we have *peace with God*, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

My dear brethren, if it be so, who has such ground for real pleasure and joy as a true Christian? Who is so likely to be happy, as he who walks in the bright sunshine of the Divine favour? Who can carry about with him so calm and tranquil a breast, as the man who feels that God is with him, and that God is for him? Who can "go on his way rejoicing" with so much propriety, as he who knows that his path is marked out for him by a gracious Providence; that whatever trials befall him in that path, come from his Father for a blessed end; who is upborne in his afflictions by the arm of Divine love, and is cheered at all times by the prospect, which he sees before his eyes, of the kingdom of glory? Yes, brethren, bring the Christian and the worldling to this place of meeting; let them compare their feelings; let them look at the sources of their mutual gratification; let them describe to each other the state which they are both in; and tell each other the future prospects which they are both anticipating. And how contemptible will the world and all its boasted happiness appear, when set in contrast with the principles and expectations by which the soul of a Christian is animated! The one has every thing to make him cheerful; the other's heart may reasonably be filled with sadness. Come, then, my brethren, ye that love the world, and form a new estimate of the power and effects of religion. Rid your minds of the too common notion, that religion makes people melancholy. It takes them from *your* pleasures; but it introduces them to new pleasures—to pleasures far greater and far better than yours. It gives them peace, under circumstances which fill your bosoms with

disquietude and dread. It bears them up under those events of life, which sink and overwhelm your souls. It furnishes them with an anchor, by which their vessel is held fast, even in the hurricane. It supplies them with a foundation, upon which their house shall stand firm and unmoved, when the storms of this life and the tempest of the last day assail it. And when *death* comes—death, so terrible to an unpardoned sinner—then, oh! then, the truth, that "there is no condemnation," takes from that enemy his only sting; and the Christian looking at him can smile, and bid him welcome; and as he looks to Christ, and says, "I know in whom I have believed," he exclaims, as already a conqueror, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" And the groans of his death-bed are changed into songs, and his death-bed itself becomes a triumphal chariot. And all this, because God is with him, and God is for him—his reconciled Father and his eternal Friend. Come, then, brethren; come to the spot, where love, and peace, and every blessing is offered you. Come to "the fountain of living waters," "wash, and be clean." Believe in Christ; put on His righteousness; plead His merit, humbly, earnestly, at the throne of Divine grace; and mercy shall beam forth, and the sceptre shall be stretched out to you. God will forgive you, guilty as you are; and though you deserve to perish, you shall live for ever.

This is the blessing mentioned in the text.

III. And now, in the third and last place, let us notice a very important adjunct to the former words, which bespoke the blessing in the case of believers; namely, the *evidence afforded, by the disposition of their minds, and the character of their lives, of their being in possession of it.* The apostle states, in the last clause of the text, that those for whom "there is no condemnation," are men who "walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Religion, as some have professed it, has been any thing but fairly exhibited. Instead of being used for a high and holy purpose, to correct the depraved passions of a fallen nature, and to assimilate man to the image of God, it has been shamefully prostituted to the worst ends, and made a cover for the vilest practices. You have heard men speak of resting on Jesus; they have talked of His merit, of

His dying for their sins, and they have professed to believe on His name. But the profession of faith has been *every thing*, and the practice of faith has been nothing. They have belonged to that class denounced by the apostle, who, indeed, "name the name of Christ," but yet "depart not from iniquity."

Now the text, my brethren, only expresses what is expressed in Scripture over and over again; that every child of God, and every disciple of Jesus, will be a lover of practical piety. Faith in Christ will always bring forth the fruit of holiness; just for this reason, because the believer, when he obtains pardon, through the merit of his Saviour, for his past sins, receives, at the same time, from the hand of God, that grace which renews his nature, and so enables him to "go and sin no more." And henceforth he is influenced by another principle from that which formerly guided his mind and his conduct. Before, he was swayed by his natural inclination; but now he is swayed by the law of his God. Once "the flesh," or the corrupt passions of his "carnal mind," reigning uncontrolled without any counter influence, directed all the functions of his soul, and all the movements of his body. But now a new authority is set up within him. His old master is dethroned. He is under the "reign of grace." And he therefore "walks, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." So that if you would see a Christian—one who is at peace with God and is able, on right grounds, to anticipate heaven; look not for him in the ranks of those nominal professors, whose religion consists in periodical acts of outward devotion, while the state of the heart and the general conversation are wholly unattended to. But behold him treading you "new" path of self-denial. Behold him ascending that difficult steep which leads to yon bright city, with a cross upon his back. He "keeps his body under, and brings it into subjection." He "mortifies his members," and "crucifies the flesh, with its affections and lusts." He is tempted, but he resists temptation. He watches over his heart. He checks the rising of his natural propensities. He "eschews that

which is evil," and he "cleaves to that which is good." He strives to be humble, gentle, "pure, peaceable," and benevolent. He "holds forth the Word of life." He "shines as a light in the world." He "walks religiously, in all good works." This is the true Christian, and this the man who, "at length, by God's mercy, attains eternal felicity."

And now, my dear brethren, you that are, by faith and holiness, the sincere followers of Jesus Christ; you that renounce yourselves, and rest humbly on the merits of His passion, and look, through Him alone, to the joys and glories of the future life, come, to-day, to the table* which His hands have spread with the rich provision of His body and blood, and there eat and drink, for the strengthening and refreshment of your souls. "Draw near with faith, and take that holy sacrament to your comfort." It is the pledge of God's love. It is the precious token of His covenanted mercy. It reminds you of the "agony and bloody sweat," of the "cross and passion of your adorable Saviour." Take it, then, and let it seal forgiveness, reconciliation, and salvation to your hearts. That table is a family table. That feast is a feast of love. That sacrament is a communion of kindred hearts, knit together in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity." As such approach it, and rid your minds of all remaining selfishness; and let it help you to obey the Divine command that we "love one another." Oh! that that spot, drawing around it a continually increasing number of real and faithful Christians, may be in every parish a happy meeting place, a place where differences are buried, and concord reigns. Oh! that from that centre of Christian unity there may go forth multitudes of holy and affectionate men, loving their fellow-creatures, and labouring, with Christian zeal, to advance their interests!

God grant our prayer, and vouchsafe of His infinite mercy, that, absolved from guilt through the merit of His Son, and edified by His grace, we may, at last, come to the heavenly mansion, and sit down at that "supper," the joys of which shall extend throughout eternity. Amen.

* This Sermon was preached on a Communion Sunday

THINGS ABOVE.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D.

PREACHED AT THE NATIONAL SCOTCH CHURCH, SWALLOW STREET, PICCADILLY,
ON SUNDAY EVENING, MARCH 2, 1845.

On behalf of the Day and Sunday Schools.

"Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."—Colossians iii. 2.

THE highest duties of the believer are based on his greatest privileges; the one feeding and inspiring the other, and both ministering in their respective spheres, to the perfection of Christian character. What also is our duty, is made, in the transforming glory of the Gospel, our delight. "Risen with Christ" is our precious state; "setting our affections on things above" is not only our obligation, but our enjoyment. Christ rose bodily from the tomb; we rise spiritually. Sin is our incubus by nature; and as soon as this sea weight is lifted away, the soul, inspired with new and elastic energies, plumes her wing, and aspires upward to her only culminating point—the throne of God.

It is implied in the exhortation of the text, *that things above are known to us*. We may love the *unseen*, but not the *unknown*. "Whom having not seen we love; and in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice." The things that are above are all inscribed and comprehended in the sacred Scriptures. The Bible is the map of heaven—the mirror of glory—the apocalypse of the land that is afar off. Christ came from heaven, shaking its fragrance from His wings; and the Scripture is the alabaster box that contains it. He came from above, uttering out its mysterious things, and leaving them stereotyped and permanent on the sacred page; therein we are

to read and learn them. We can thus say, "that which we have seen and heard and handled;" and we seek the flower and perfection of these, not as *unknown*, though *unseen*.

It is also implied, *that the things above are ours*. We may not set our hearts on that which is not ours; but these are ours. For, says St. Paul, things are ours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life or death, or things present, or things to come; all are ours, for we are Christ's, and Christ is God's." From the loveliest flower that blooms on earth, to Him who gave it its tints and its perfume, all are ours. Christians are the only true landlords and sea-lords of the universe; for all of it ministers to them. Wherever the snow falls, or the rivers run; wherever the firmament is hung with its drapery of clouds, or sown with stars; wherever man lives or God is, all is ours in the second Adam; and on all of these that are above, we may in Him set our affections.

It is, in the next place, worthy of remark, that if we do not set our affections on things above, *we shall most assuredly set them upon things below*. Empty man's heart cannot be; its affections cannot stand alone; they must cling and cluster around an object of support; they must love and worship either God or an idol; the choice therefore is not whether you shall set your affections on things above or not, but whether you

shall set them upon things above or on things below, on God or an idol. We may also observe, that the only way to detach the affections from the love of things below, is to press upon them the beauty and the glory of things above; for an evil preference can only be dislodged by the appliance of a good one. The love of the one will ebb before the influx of the other. It is with this end in view that I proceed to delineate the excellency of "those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

The things above are those amid which every Christian in this assembly *must soon be placed for eternity*. It is his Father's house—the land of promise—the native realm of the soul; and surely it becomes the exiles and pilgrims of time, to visit on the wings of faith and hope those mansions, of which they must soon be the glorified inhabitants. Let our hearts, then, precede us; let our affections pre-occupy the Heavenly Jerusalem; our treasure is there—our conversation is there, and the fulfilment of all our hopes will be realised there also.

Things above are alone *fitted and worthy to occupy a Christian's soul*. The immaterial spirit cannot be replenished with the things of time. It was made to hold communion with the things of God. It is a pilgrim indeed, but a Divine pilgrim on earth, chosen to be a denizen in heaven. It is royalty in rags. The element of its enlargement and enjoyment is above. Its nutriment is the hidden manna; its repose is in the bosom of God. Husks are for swine, but living bread for it. No house of clay, but a house not made with hands must be its home. "As the hart panteth for the water brooks," so doth it pant for God.

Things above *have an overpassing and transcendent excellency*. The river there is the River of life, clear as crystal, and flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Its tree is the Tree of life,

whose fruit is for food, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. There is there no necessity for sun or moon or stars, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the light thereof. Its crown is a crown of glory; its inheritance is incorruptible; its grandeur *fadeth not away*; its cedars are not gnawed by a worm; its robes are not injured by the moth; its gold is not covered with rust; its melodies have no intermingling minors; its days, like the hours of the dial, are measured by sunshine; and soon, if we are risen with Christ, the benedictions that rest upon our heads on earth shall bloom into diadems of beauty, and the dim lights of time shall burst into the emerald splendours of unutterable glory.

The things *above, endure for ever*. They are not only without alloy, but without decay. Even a little pleasure that lasts for years, is more precious than a greater that lasts for a day. Now every thing above has struck upon it the superscription "For ever." The sweetest joy is everlasting. It is an everlasting rest, "eternal in heaven;" "it *fadeth not away*." Here it is by incessant watchfulness we live; but there we need no watchfulness, for there is neither peril nor possibility of death. In this life, the fairest flowers *fade soonest*; the more closely they are clasped, the more rapidly they die. The requiems of death follow fast on our evangels. But in heaven, there is a zodiac of joy, from which there shall be no outlet; an eternity of blessedness, of which there can be no suspension. God, the Fountain of all happiness, shall overflow all; and every atom of our souls shall lodge His glory, and every portion of our nature shall be inlaid with His holiness.

In seeking and setting our affections on things above, *we are certain of success*. The things of the world are all uncertain. "The race is not always to the swift, nor the victory to the strong;" and uncer-

tainty, it is well known, paralyzes efforts that would otherwise be strenuous; whereas the assurance of success imparts impulse and energy to every hope, aspiration, and endeavour. While heavenly things are ours, in virtue of our being Christ's, yet it is not the less true, that they are only to be reached by "running the race set before us," "fighting the good fight," "striving," "asking," "seeking." "He that endureth to the end, shall be saved." But in the midst of all this, we are encouraged and sustained by the experience of Paul—"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air."

The things above *become daily more and more important, and things below grow daily less so.* Every day takes from the length of life, and from the lustre of earthly things, as it adds to the weight and importance of eternal and heavenly realities. The rising tide is rolling in, and the successive waves of an eternal sea swell and break upon the sands on which we now stand; and very soon what we call life shall be covered by the bottomless and boundless ocean of eternity. But the glories and felicities of heaven cannot be washed away. They are above the tide-mark; they are not touched by the mutations of time. On these, therefore, fix your hearts; let these constitute your treasure, and in due time, the Eden-gate shall open on its hinge of harmony, and admit you to the possession of what you now aspire to.

The pursuit of things above will *cast down upon you a transforming beauty.* Man's heart never acts without being acted upon; contact with the good sanctifies; communion with the happy gladdens. The vibrations of a happy spirit are felt throughout the whole circle of its

influence. How much more transforming and sanctifying must it be, to maintain uninterrupted contact with the glories and joys of heaven! There will thus flow into the soul the influx of the life of God; and as the light of day acts on the sensitive metal of the photographer, tracing out the objects from which it is radiated, even so the effulgence that falls from heaven on the soul of him who sets his affections on its objects, will transform him from glory to glory—replenish his spirit with the seeds of unutterable joys, and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, write on him the legible and indelible impress of God.

Certainly, the fuller our experience is of the things of this world, the less reason does there appear for our attachment to them. It is, at the best, a dazzling masquerade. It is full of gay appearances, covering and concealing grim facts. Its pleasures have the evanescence, without the purity, of snow-flakes; and its sweetest associations are the shortest. Our ties on earth daily become fewer, while those in heaven multiply; week after week the sky shuts down upon fewer of those, with whom we have "taken sweet counsel," and every year carries with it its harvest to God.

Seek these things in *Christ*. He is the compendium of them all. "In Him dwell all the treasures of wisdom." In Him you have a right to them. Through Him only you may reach them.

Seek them in the *Holy Scriptures*; these are the inventory that contains them. Its brilliant poetry; its touching eloquence; its powerful reasoning; its simple history, are all employed to set forth the excellence and glory of things above. It is a sea, whose floor is covered with pearls; and they that dive deepest and oftenest, will bring up the richest and most precious.

Seek them in the *ministry of the Gospel*. Every faithful minister is a star set

on the firmament to reveal something of the lustre of things above. Were there no inherent energy in the living voice, reasoning with living men; were there no promised blessing; were it no ordinance of God; yet, the change which it is, in the mode of exhibiting the same truths, is calculated to freshen them, or at least, to place them at a new angle from which they may be more vividly seen.

Seek them *on the Sabbath*. It is God's day; it is a short interval reclaimed from the world; an Eden in the desert; a Goshen in Egypt; a suspension of the wheels of time, in order that there may be heard the tones of an eternal jubilee, and seen, dimly it may be, the transalpine glories of the land that is afar off.

Seek them *in prayer*. "Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened." Prayer moves the arm that moves the universe. He that gives the things, gives the heart to pray for them.

It is the design of these Schools, connected with this Church, the only Scotch Church in the west end of London, (for which it is my privilege to plead this evening,) to elevate the affections of the young, and fix them on things above. The teacher becomes the assistant of the minister, the school the vestibule of the Church, and all as pioneers and porches that lead to heaven. Originated from the spirit of the Gospel, they are intended to minister to its spread and influence. It is the glory of Christianity, that while it ministers to the highest, it condescends to the humblest. The oldest cherubim and the youngest child are alike the subjects of its empire; and it is difficult to say, whether it is covered with the greatest lustre when it fills the heavenly hierarchy with its effulgence and joy, or when it "suffers little children to come unto Christ, and forbids them not."

THE CHRISTIANISATION OF THE INDUSTRIOUS CLASSES.

At a meeting of the Bedford Row Auxiliary to the London City Mission, held at the Music Hall, Store Street, Bedford Square, on Thursday, March 6, the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel in the chair, the following observations were made on this important topic:—

The Rev. JAMES HAMILTON, at the close of an interesting address, said—"I am here with considerable difficulty to-day, but I felt desirous to come, though it were only to throw out one suggestion; and if I could make it palpable to him whom it chiefly concerns, I should consider this an important occasion. I feel that the problem given to modern Christianity, is the christianisation of the industrious classes. They have got more completely away from under evangelisation, than any portion of the community; and, if you count your Church-goers, you will be surprised how few hard-working men there are among them. And yet they are the most numerous portion of the population; and, therefore, in the account-book of heaven, they are the most important section of Britain's millions; and, in some respects, they are to the community the most important also. He who in this day should contribute essentially to the retrieving the religious interests of the working classes, would be the greatest benefactor to our modern Christianity. We want some one, who will just throw himself in as the evangelist of those orders; one who will not, either from his ecclesiastical or his denominational relations, be suspected of secondary aims in his efforts to bring them under the influence of truth. And, from looking around, from watching his whole career, from knowing the good opinion he has already secured for himself amongst those classes, and considering the relation he occupies to the Church Universal, with the support of the Evangelical Churches of all communions, and with such a congregation to second him, I know no one upon whom the function, the highest perhaps in our modern British Christianity,

can more appropriately devolve, than on our esteemed and honoured Chairman. It was an object, that lay very near the heart of one of the most emancipating Christian minds in this country—the late lamented Dr. Arnold—what could be done for bringing the working classes of England under the influence of the Gospel; but his own career was cut short, before he could contribute anything very ostensible to this end. To this, however, our English Christianity must address itself, if we would not see our working classes go off into open infidelity or absolute atheism. I hail an association such as this, which we are met to form, because it puts it in the power of him who is at its head, who has already done so much in that direction, to do a great deal more. I hope he will forgive me for saying all this; I have said it, just because it has been upon my own thoughts, and because, were I in other circumstances; were it not for inextricable entanglements of other kinds, I do not know any end more important, for which one could live, than just for elevating by evangelising and Christianising his hard-working, his industrious fellow-countrymen.

The Hon. and Rev. BAPTIST W. NOEL.—The remarks which have been made by my dear friend, who has just sat down, if they might be oppressive to any other person, are especially so to me, because I recognise most distinctly the immense importance of the object, but at the same time feel my utter incapacity to do that blessed work, to which he would call me to give my time and thoughts. I do not think there can be a more important, nor one which ought more to enlist our affections; but, as he said, the difficulties in the way of doing any thing effectual, are exceedingly great; and for my own part, I do not at this moment see how I have the smallest power to take any step in that great cause, which should at all produce any considerable effect. It is often my prayer, that God would be pleased to raise up a suitable instrumentality, and I hope He will; but I cannot see that I possess it myself, or know in the least to what quarter to direct my thoughts and attention, even if I had a great deal more power than I have. I do not know how to accomplish it. I fully see the important, the urgent obligations, resting upon Christians; but how to hinder these hundreds of thousands from passing away from the truth, and living and dying without the smallest hope, in a country which God has so much blessed, is, alas! a thing which remains at present an unsolved problem. It seems equally difficult to explain how virtuous poverty should be relieved, and how we are to meet the deep and growing hatred to our institutions, and to the religion interwoven with them. That Christians should turn their attention to it greatly, and that they would be blessed who were instrumental to the relieving these evils in our social condition and present circumstances, is unquestionable. However, I will not pursue these remarks, but merely commend to you all, and charge it upon my own conscience, to make this a matter of serious and earnest prayer, that God may be pleased to grant a suitable instrumentality, to raise our working classes, temporally and spiritually, physically and morally, mentally and religiously. We should pray for it much and often. I hope we shall; and then God may be pleased to give the instrumentality, in a way of which we have no previous imagination.

THE IMPARTIALITY OF GOD IN THE DISPENSATION OF HIS GIFTS.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM NEVILLE, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, UPPER EDMONTON.

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him"—Acts x. 34, 35.

PREVIOUS to commencing my discourse, I wish to observe, that there is no immoral conduct which the Law takes more cognizance of, than that of defamation; and that for a very just reason—because a man's interest and comfort in a great degree depend upon his reputation. But there never was any one so much defamed, as God himself has been for the last fourteen hundred years, both from the pulpit and the press; and what is most extraordinary is, that it has been by many of His own household, who to magnify His sovereignty, instead of representing Him as a God of love, have depicted Him as an austere Being, expecting to "reap where He had not sown, and to gather where He had not strawed;" and the present discourse is intended to disprove such a statement, as the apostle St. Peter has done before, when he said—"Of a truth I perceive, there is no respect of persons with God; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." If, when Adam forfeited the favour of God, He had cast him and his posterity off, from any hopes of ever being reinstated therein, but to remain under His displeasure, as the fallen angels do, there could have been no cause of complaint on the part of man, but he must have acquiesced in recognising the sentence to be just. Or, if God had provided a ransom for a small portion of mankind, and left the rest under irrevocable condemnation, they must have acknowledged, saying, "Just and righteous art Thou in all Thy ways, O Lord God Almighty." But in what rapacious language does the prophet Isaiah exclaim, saying, "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, and forests, and

every tree therein," for the Lord hath provided a ransom more than equivalent to the sins of the whole world: so that not an individual, from the first-born of Adam to the last of the human race, should perish, but obtain eternal life—unless they render the death of Christ unavailing to them, by obdurate impenitency, and a wilful rejection of the overtures of God's mercy! The truth of this observation, although in opposition to the sentiments of some, was the doctrine of the Church for the three first centuries, and is supported by a variety of Scriptures. But, as there is as much stability in a single sentence of the inspired writers, as when variously repeated, we only quote one, which takes the utmost latitude, and is unequivocal in its import; and that is the testimony of St. John, when he says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." The word "propitiation" is Latin, and signifies an appeaser, or reconciler. So that with regard to provisional means to effect the salvation of all men, there is no respect of persons with God. But so strong were the prejudices of the Jews against the people of every other nation, considering them as outcast reprobates, that the Lord wrought a miracle, in order to convince Peter, that no distinction of national privileges entitled any to the favour of God, but that "whosoever feared Him, and worked righteousness, was accepted with Him."

As the narrative which led the apostle to such a conclusion, is particularly interesting, it cannot but be edifying to refer to it.

The leading character in the history, is

Cornelius, an officer in the Roman army, who, though an heathen, was not an idolater, but "one that feared God, with all his house." He is a remarkable instance to prove, that "the Lord is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." And, rather than he should remain ignorant of the way of salvation, an angel was commissioned to direct him to send for Peter, who should tell him "what further things he ought to do." Upon which he immediately sent two servants to Joppa, where the apostle resided, with a request that he would come to him. And "on the next day, as the servants were journeying," Peter, as was usual with him, went to the housetop, (it being a flat roof,) to pray; as the devout Jews were accustomed to retire for devotion three times a day, namely, at the third, sixth, and ninth hour—that is, nine, twelve, and three o'clock. And, while he was in that situation, "he became very hungry," and ordered some provisions. But, during the delay, he fell into a supernatural elevation of mind, and abstraction from his bodily senses, and "saw, in a vision, heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were a variety of beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, saying, Arise, Peter, kill and eat. But he said, Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." Upon which we remark, that amongst other methods which God adopted, to keep the Jews as separate as possible from the Gentiles, one was the restricting them from making use of any other birds or beasts, as articles of food, but what were described in the law of Moses; which fixed such a peculiarity upon them, as prevented their intimately associating with the heathen, and was urged as a reason by Peter, why he should not enter into the house of Cornelius, "saying, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew, to keep company, or come unto one of another nation." But God had showed him by the vision, that, under the Gospel, all distinctions were to be done away. And when Cornelius related that he had been "directed by an angel to send for him, and that himself and his household, with many others, were assembled, anxiously waiting to hear of the things of

God," "then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him."

In further speaking from these words, we consider in what sense God is "no respecter of persons."

Some may be ready to say, 'Are not the gifts of His providence more abundant, in many instances, than in others? Do not some abound in wealth, while others are in want? In answer to which it may be said, God giveth riches to some, as He gave Israel "a king in His anger." When men set their hearts upon the world, and "pant after the dust of the earth" as their portion, He allows them to obtain their desires, but, with all, He sends "leanness into their souls," so that "their table becometh a snare and a trap unto them, and that which should have been for their good, becomes an occasion of falling." For as it never enters into their minds to glorify God with their wealth, it hurls them, like a whirlwind, to everlasting destruction.—(Proverbs i. 32.) In which state, "their riches will eat them, as it were fire."—(James v. 3.) It was one of the severest sentences that God ever pronounced against His ancient people, when He said, "Ephraim," (by which is implied the whole nation,) "Ephraim loveth idols, let him alone." They were in a much happier state as captives in Babylon, under restraint, than when enjoying their liberty and prosperity, but given to idolatry. The condition of that man is more to be envied, who is brought under the yoke every day by trials and afflictions, and is thereby drawn from the world, and kept walking humbly with God, than one who is clothed with scarlet, and abounds in all the enjoyments of life, if, at the same time, he is "making gold his hope, and fine gold his confidence;" whose expectations and desires are bounded within the narrow circle of this transitory state. If the condition of a man is sanctified by the grace and blessing of God, it is a matter of little moment whether he moves in a higher or lower station of society, as his happiness in either case is derived from a superior source than any objects of sense, however valuable in their nature.

The various orders amongst intelligent beings are essential to the general good of

the community," both upon earth, and in the celestial state. In heaven there are a variety of gradations in rank, as "thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, angels and archangels." So the various ranks amongst men, contribute to the general happiness and good of society, as St. Paul argues by referring to the natural body. The feet could not do without the head, nor the head without the feet. The various members do not envy one another, but exercise a mutual sympathy for the general welfare. And so it would be with the body politic, if all were actuated by the revealed will of God. The poor would not envy the rich, nor the wealthy oppress the necessitous, but there would be a reciprocal exchange of acts of kindness and respect from one to the other, so that each would shine in its sphere, like the greater and smaller stars, diffusing a general brilliancy all around. For, although God "divideth His gifts severally as He will," He never giveth to one to the prejudice of another; and wherever His gifts are abused to such a purpose, He will render vengeance to the oppressor. So, no duty is more insisted upon in the Scriptures, than that of being kind and affectionate one towards another. Of which we have an interesting example in the history of Boaz, an Old Testament saint, and a wealthy husbandman, who, upon entering the fields at the time his workmen were reaping, saluted them, saying, "The Lord be with you;" to which they responded, "The Lord bless thee."—(Ruth ii. 4.) We may readily imagine, that the servants of such a master were equally happy in their labour, as he was who employed them; and if all classes were actuated by those principles which the Word of God inculcates, human society, though not exempt from infirmities and afflictions, yet would be as harmonious as the birds of the wood.

Again, it is the appointment of God, that "the poor shall never cease out of the land," as it is through them, chiefly, that men have an opportunity of testifying their love to Christ. And He will say to their benefactors at the last day—"Inasmuch as ye did it to these, My brethren, ye did it unto Me."

Secondly, with respect to spiritual gifts. Wherever an extraordinary measure of Divine grace is given, the goodness of God is seen; not so much in the

personal advantage which such are partakers of, as in the general benefit they are of to others. As, for instance, the extraordinary measure of heavenly influence which was imparted to Moses, was more for the profit of the people, than beneficial to himself. His intercessions were many times available, to the turning away of the wrath of God from them. It is not with God as it has sometimes been with the proud father of a family, who, to maintain his own dignity, has endowed one son with his estate, to the impoverishing of his other children; whereas, in every instance, where the Lord gives a larger measure of grace and wisdom to some, it is that thereby they may be as burning and shining lights to all around them, or as an embankment against the torrent of iniquity, to prevent the whole earth being deluged with its polluting streams; or He acts as a wise parent, who bestows a better education upon some of his children, that they may instruct the others, and be to them examples of filial piety. For as God would not leave the event of sending His well-beloved Son into the world in a state of uncertainty, whether any of the human race would accept of His salvation or not, He determined to shed forth such a measure of Divine influence upon some, as should efficiently subdue the natural obduracy of the heart, and reluctant opposition of the will, into obedience to Himself, and promised to His Son Jesus Christ, "that He should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, by bringing many sons unto glory." Nevertheless, "the Lord is good unto all, and His tender mercies are over all His works," so that He beareth long with the contradiction of sinners against Himself, "sending rain from heaven and fruitful seasons," even to the unthankful; and causing "His sun to shine upon the evil as well as upon the good," in order that His beneficence might lead them to repentance, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved." For, although He hath elected some to everlasting life, He casteth away none but the incorrigible; such as "will not hearken to His counsel, nor listen to His reproof," but are deaf to the most pathetic entreaties, saying, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

In conclusion, we remark, it is nowhere said in the Scriptures, that none

but the elect will be saved, but on the contrary, all are exhorted to "look diligently, lest any fail of the grace of God," or have received it in vain. Now that is impossible with respect to the elect, as it is confirmed to them "by an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure;" but to others, it is not so; and God will judge every one in conformity with the rules of equity and justice, and render to all according to the improvements or neglects they have made of the privileges given to them. "To those, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good." And on that day, when such a decision will be made, it will then appear as conspicuous as the light, that "God is no respecter of persons," "but in every nation, he that feared Him and worked righteousness, is accepted with Him." And that such may be your happy condition, may God in His infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

NINEVEH.

THE *Augsburgh Gazette* gives an interesting account of the prosecution of M. Botta's researches at Nineveh, where he has one hundred and sixty workmen employed in excavating. It states that, besides the walls, covered with sculptures and inscriptions, many antiquities of a peculiar and as yet inexplicable nature are met with. For example: under the large bricks, of which the floor consists, are stone repositories, which are filled with small clay enamelled figures of men and beasts, without any thing on the surface indicating their existence. In another place were discovered great rows of earthen vases, of a remarkable size, placed on a brick floor, and filled with human bones, and similar to those which have been found at Babylon, Ahwaz, and other places in South Persia. The palace seems to have been totally plundered before its destruction; for neither jewels, nor instruments, nor even the small cylinders so numerous in the neighbourhood, are any where found; merely some bronze images of beasts (for instance, a very fine lion), and also a part of the bronze wheel of a war chariot. But the most incomprehensible circumstance is, that the alabaster slabs with which the walls are cased, and which are covered with inscriptions and sculptures, bear on the back, likewise, inscriptions in arrow-headed characters, and certainly not in the Assyrian, but in the Babylonian language. As it is not to be supposed that the architects would have been so foolish as to have graven these inscriptions where no one could have seen them without pulling down the wall, it must be presumed that the slabs have served twice, first belonging to a Babylonian palace, and afterwards having been transposed by the Assyrians and freshly graven. At present no sculptures have been found on the back; which would, indeed, be of the greatest interest. Some of the lately found bas-reliefs are especially remarkable; for instance, one representing the siege of a town situate on an island: the sea is covered with ships, the fore-part of which forms a horse's head, and which are occupied in bringing the trunks of trees for the purpose of erecting a dam. The water is covered with all kinds of marine animals—fishes, crabs, and winged sea-horses. The richness of the details, and the mass of sculpture which the palace contains, are amazing; and it is incomprehensible how so magnificent a building should have been so strangely buried in the earth. The French ambassador at Constantinople has not yet obtained permission from the Porte to send to Paris those articles of antiquity which will bear transport.—*Literary Gazette*.

The Old and New Testaments Connected, in the History of the Jews and Neighbouring Nations from the Declension of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the time of Christ. By HUMPHRY FAIRBAIRN, Dean of Norwich. With an account of the Rabbinic Authorities arranged Alphabetically, by the Rev A. M'CAUL, D.D., Canon of St. Paul's, and Professor of Hebrew, King's College, London. 2 Vols 8vo. T. Tegg, Chesapeake

Few works of our divines of the seventeenth century, have obtained more deserved attention, or have been of greater assistance to the theological student, than the one at the head of this article—a work doubtless familiar, at least by name, to most of our readers. For writing an history of the interval between the restoration of the Jews and the birth of Christ from Grecian and Eastern documents, Prideaux has shown himself eminently qualified by the profound learning and sound judgment displayed throughout his pages. The object which he embraces, relates to a period of great interest and importance, and one which offered materials of every kind both for the theologian and the historian. The erudition displayed by our author in illustrating the manners, customs, monuments, laws, and institutions of the Jews, and the various phases of their history, together with their relations with other ancient countries, make his work a valuable body of scriptural archaeology. Hence we are not surprised to find that in the year 1666, it had gone through no fewer than sixteen editions. The popularity which Prideaux's work had acquired, no doubt suggested to Shuckford the idea of writing an account of the "Connection of Sacred and Profane History" in the interval between the earliest records of the creation, and that period when the subject was undertaken by Prideaux. But Shuckford did not live to finish more than half of his original design, although the title page of his work has continued until the present day to announce his labours according to the original extent of his undertaking, which was to give "A Connected History from the Creation of the World to the Dissolution of the Assyrian Empire at the Death of Sardanapalus;" whereas the narrative extends no lower than to the occupation by the Infidels of the Holy Land under the immediate auspices of Moses. Thus an important portion of Sacred History still remained to be embodied in a continuous narrative until the time when the

work of Prideaux commences. This hiatus has been ably supplied by Dr Russell, the present Bishop of Glasgow, in a work of three volumes, entitled "A Connection of Sacred and Profane History from the death of Joshua to the Decline of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, intended to complete the works of Shuckford and Prideaux." Thus we have seven unusually large and well filled octavo volumes of the history of those nations of the world, which flourished before the commencement of any authentic records respecting them, excepting always the brief and broken annals of the Jewish Scripture. Although these three works take different periods, they do but complete one subject—a thorough acquaintance with which is indispensably necessary to all who wish to become skilful expounders of the lively oracles of Divine Truth. If it be required of every Christian minister, not only to persuade the doctile, but to "convince the gain-sayers," if every scribe that is rightly instructed in the kingdom of God should be able, like a wealthy householder, to produce out of his treasures things new and old, it must be admitted that the study of God's ancient people should form an indispensable part of every well arranged system of theological education.

"Ye too, who tend Christ's wandering flock,
Well may ye gather round the rock
That once was Sion's hill
To watch the fire upon the mount
Still blazing like the solar fount,
Yet unconsumed still."

Besides the interest which attaches to Prideaux's Connection as an elaborate work of biblical research, the present edition possesses an additional value as containing "An Account of the Rabbinic Authorities arranged Alphabetically" from the pen of a Reverend Professor of that sacred language in which Moses taught and Isaiah prophesied. "As book opens book," Dr M'Cauley's Introduction will enable the student to follow up his studies with advantage, by pointing out to him how to profit by the references made by Prideaux in the course of his work.

We cannot take leave of these interesting volumes, without expressing our obligations to Mr. Tegg for the republication of this valuable work—a work, judging from our own feelings, from the perusal of which the reader will rise both gratified and instructed.

THE CALL FOR LABOURERS

A SERMON

BY THE HON. AND REV. BAPTIST W. MORRIS

PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, BARNARD'S INN, ON SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 1895.

Before making the Annual Collection on behalf of the Church Missionary Society.

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."—Matthew ix. 35—38.

WHEN our Lord exercised His ministry on earth, He manifested His benevolence towards men by incessant labours for their welfare. His chief object was, to make known to them those saving truths, without which they could neither be happy hereafter, nor even here; but together with that doctrine, which was to lead them to everlasting happiness, we read also, in this passage, of His mighty power employed in healing their bodily sicknesses too. This was done in compassion to them. He did not overlook their temporal sufferings, nor was it a matter of small consequence to Him, whether He should alleviate, or not, their present sufferings. And this second habit of our blessed Saviour was calculated to give effect to the former, and to attract the attention of many to the greater concerns of the soul, when they witnessed the benevolent regard, which He paid to their temporal wants.

Multitudes being thus attracted by the force of His miracles, and led to His word which "was with power," it is said, that when He saw these multitudes round Him on one occasion, faint many of them with the length of the journey they had taken, and reposing on the ground in various groups, looking like a large flock which had no shepherd, "He was moved with compassion on them," and it was then that He gave the injunction, which is recorded in our text. It is true, that in those synagogues where He himself preached, there were those who read the Law continually to the people; there were priests and Levites—the authorized instructors of the people: but, perverting the Scriptures by their false comments, and dishonouring them by their unholy

lives, they were but "blind leaders of the blind," and still that people might be pronounced to be, "as sheep having no shepherd," it was their spiritual blindness, seeing the readiness of wisdom, to enter to the Gospel, when there was none to preach it to them, our Lord said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

Our Saviour might, if He had pleased, have converted all these multitudes whom He pitied, by one expression of His will. But it has been the appointment of God, in His wisdom and benevolence to men, that man should be made the means of saving his brother man; it was His will, therefore, that they should not be saved by miracle, but that they should be saved by the instrumentality of human teachers. He might have multiplied these teachers at His pleasure, and sent forth an innumerable army of men, sustained by His almighty power; fed like Elijah by ravens, and borne along as the eagle prophet was, by the heaven-sent chariot; such flying cars might have transported to the farthest ends of the world, evangelists, gifted with the knowledge of every language, and capable of dawning the hearts by any miracle they pleased. It was His will, that the world should be engaged in this great and good work; and therefore those evangelists were not to be sent, except through the people. The people, however, were so poor, that men of law, men, also, of the Church of God should be engaged and share in the benevolent work.

in the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

This injunction was given as a consequence of the circumstances which they then witnessed. They saw the multitudes lying on the ground, faint and weary, come from vast distances because they had no instructors; and when the harvest appeared to be so great, and the labourers so few, our Lord said—"Pray ye therefore." Consequently wherever these circumstances occur, the injunction applies; the reason for the injunction remaining still, the injunction itself remains. If the plenteousness of the harvest, with the paucity of the labourers, was a reason for such prayer then, it is as good a reason for similar prayer wherever these circumstances exist; and if in our day it is still true, that "the harvest is plenteous, and the labourers few," then is this injunction given to the Church of God now—"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

Let us consider, then, the circumstances which are here mentioned, and the injunction which followed them. For, never in any age of the world was it more true than it is this day, that "the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers few."

2. By "the harvest" is obviously meant men who are willing to be instructed, ready to be gathered to Christ, just as the grain which is ripe for the sickle, is ready to be gathered by the reaper. The expression, divested of its figurative dress, imports that there are multitudes of persons ready to be instructed in the Gospel. And however willing the people of Judea were to be taught then, or the inhabitants of the Roman empire in the subsequent ages, there are fully as large numbers equally willing to be instructed at this day, who have no instructor.

It has sometimes been thought, to go no further than our own metropolis, that the eight hundred thousand persons, who are living in this city in the neglect of public worship, are inaccessible, incapable of being instructed; that there are no means to reach them. The aid of a few Christian men has put in motion a simple, and I might say a feeble machinery, and the result of that effort is, that already many hundreds of those, whose names sound the most deplorable, have been converted to Christ, and the concurrent testimony of above a hundred devoted men, now visiting the most unfre-

quented, unexamined points of this city, where shoes are gathered who seemed farthest from the Gospel, and even from good morals, shows that these persons are perfectly willing to listen to an honest, warm-hearted proclamation of the Gospel of Christ. From house to house do these messengers of mercy visit, and wherever they go, if they meet with rudeness, it is the exception, generally they are welcomed even by the most prodigate or the most ungodly, with courtesy and with attention. So that if there be in this city that prodigious mass of souls, who are living without any public recognition of God, or any instruction in the Gospel, they are not a mass of hopeless weeds, but a "harvest" ready to be gathered, if there were labourers sent to gather them.

And what is true in this city, is true in the remotest nations no less. What has been done by a very few labourers else where, proves to us distinctly that "the harvest" is very "plenteous." The Sandwich Islands, having renounced idolatry, are now manifesting a vigorous piety. Many islands of the South Seas have turned from idols, and are worshipping God in Christ. African tribes, for three hundred miles up the great river Niger, have expressed their readiness to be taught. For hundreds of miles along that western coast of Africa, they have declared repeatedly their willingness to receive Christian instructors. Throughout Southern Africa the same disposition prevails, and the Bechuana and other tribes have invited Missionaries among them, who are teaching them this day at their own request. Throughout the East no less remarkable has been the readiness of multitudes to be instructed. Especially in India, placed by the providence of God under a Christian sceptre, is this willingness becoming every day more apparent. The amalgamation of the different castes of Hindoos in the large armies maintained by the Government there, the employment of thousands under a Christian Government, and in conjunction with Europeans, the European education of the wards of Government, who include many of the wealthiest and most influential young men in India, the multiplication of English schools, in which all European science lies open to the mind of the Hindoo, now springing forward to knowledge,—all is precipitating the rejection of idolatry in that land. European history, European science, medical knowledge, besides the direct Missionary influences,

are rendering it appetent to the most thoughtful persons in India, that their religion is a lie; and at this day, there are multitudes in every part of India, curious respecting our religion, sceptical respecting their own; who, just like the multitudes, untaught but willing to listen, that surrounded our Lord on this occasion, may justify us in saying—"The harvest truly is plenteous." Nor less, in this day, is the great contiguous empire of China coming into the same circumstances. It has been proved, that along its coast, the population are capable of reading, and willing to read Christian books; five populous cities in that empire are now thrown open to British commerce, where Englishmen are placed under British protection, where missionaries may plant themselves without molestation, and where a friendly and intelligent people are willing to listen to what a foreigner may say to them. So that along those shores, it is not less true, that "the harvest is plenteous."

At the same time "the labourers are few"—very few. In Africa scarcely anything is done. In India, although now there is a band of Missionaries, for the number and the assiduity and zeal of which every Christian man may feel that he can render his thanks to God, still when compared with the vast multitudes that might be instructed and are willing to listen, their numbers are lamentably inadequate. At this day, there are thousands of populous villages, hundreds of important towns, cities upon cities of the largest class, that have no Missionary at all—no Christian man to proclaim to them the doctrine of Christ. Two or three Missionaries are all that can make known the Gospel among the Himalayahs, from Assam even up to the banks of the Sutlej—two or three missionaries alone for all those mountain tribes, that have not the prejudices of Hindoos, and are willing to listen. The immense tribes of central India, in the allied States, have hardly had any attention paid to them, by those who have heard from time to time the native princes and their subjects expressing their readiness to receive missionary instruction. So that if "the harvest is plenteous" in India, "the labourers" in India "are few." And in China they are fewer still. Perhaps at this day there are not more than sixteen missionaries, who give their energies to the great task of converting China to the faith of the Gospel; and of those sixteen,

our own Society has only the honour of sending two. Two young men, as yet unacquainted with the Chinese language, who must still employ some time as they begin effectually to minister to the wants of those idolaters, are all that our Society—that the Church of England altogether—has done to proclaim the knowledge of Jesus Christ to these millions, who are ready to listen. Truly, if "the harvest is plenteous," "the labourers are few."

Under the circumstances, then, in which we are placed this day, this injunction of our Lord applies perhaps with greater force than at any previous date of the world's history: because, while "the harvest is plenteous," and while "the labourers are few," the opportunities to instruct these numbers are greater than ever the providence of God presented to the Christian Church before. The earliest preachers of the Gospel had every where to meet bonds and imprisonment, and obloquy and death; but Christian governments, while they embrace among their subjects millions of heathen, have spread their predominant influence over the world, and the whole earth is now ready to respect the Christian teacher, under the protection of the name of the great European powers. God has given facilities for making Christ known, such as were never yet possessed; it remains to be seen, whether the Church will obey His injunction—"Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

II. We are to address our prayers for this purpose to "the Lord of the harvest:" because the harvest is gathered for God. Every soul that is converted, is a reclaimed rebel; every soul that is brought to the knowledge of Christ, becomes a devoted servant of God; and in the salvation of each soul rescued from the dominion of Satan, from the tyranny of sin, from the prevailing sorrow of heathenism, there is a glorious monument of Divine power and Divine grace, that will stand imperishably through eternity to honour God. The harvest, therefore, is to be gathered for Him.

The harvest is to be gathered, not only for Him, but by Him. It is by His power alone, that a single grain of it is gathered in. Of every person who is ever regenerated it is said, that he is "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Nothing but the work of the Spirit on the corrupted and alienated heart of man, from the most splendid capitals of Europe to the wilderness of the savage, can ever convert a human soul. All are the trophies of Divine grace; and therefore God is the Lord of all—"the Lord of the harvest," whom we must pray to put forth His own mighty power thus to save.

But at the same time, our Lord has directed us to the human agency, that is in one sense not less essential than the Divine: essential I say, because God has appointed it, and we know not at least of His ever acting without it. Assuredly He might convert the world without human agency; but has He done so? Has He ever converted so? We may dream of heathens becoming virtuous and enlightened by an immediate operation of Divine grace; but who has ever seen that? What Christian traveller has brought us the news of it? I have asked numbers of Christian travellers, whether they have ever met a heathen man, upon whose soul they had any reason to think, without the knowledge of the Gospel, a work of Divine grace had been accomplished; and they never met *one*. And therefore it is a mere speculation—not philanthropy, but selfishness—which would hinder men from seeing the duty laid upon them to make Christ known, and to make Him known by human agency. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." Just as the field of corn is never reaped except by the human reaper, but would lie and rot, however ripe and valuable the productions of the earth might be; so do these multitudes die without knowledge, and without piety, unless the human reaper enters "into the harvest" to gather them in. Ever since Christ has come, this has been His mode of operation; and I find not a word in Scripture myself, which intimates that He has ever meant to change it. When we read, in the second of Isaiah, of the nations that shall at last renounce war, and mingle in the bonds of fraternal affection as one family, we are told it is because "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem;" it *has* gone forth from that Christian Church established at Jerusalem, and the echoes of that doctrine, first issuing from the voices of apostles of

Christ, must be the instrumentality that is to bring the world to Christianity and peace. When we read, in the fifty-fifth of Isaiah, of "the mountains and the hills breaking forth into singing, and all the trees of the field clapping their hands," and a transformation of society to be effected as great as if the thorn became the fir tree, and the brier the myrtle tree, it is declared that the servants of God shall go forth to accomplish this: "Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth *before you* into singing." When we read, in the fifty-fourth and the sixtieth of Isaiah, of the glory of God arising upon His Church, the Christian Church, comprising the elect remnant of Israel at Jerusalem, then the prophet adds—"The Gentiles shall come to *Thy* light, and kings to the brightness of *Thy* rising;" hitherto have we seen this prediction accomplishing, and if the civilised world at this day have renounced the idols of its ancestors, and now consents to adore the name of Christ, it has been the result of the grace given to that Church of Christ, first gathered at Jerusalem. And what has been, will be; and still the same grace, prolonged from age to age, shall make the Saviour known to willing nations. You will recollect, in the prophecy of Daniel, that which is declared by God to be His fixed and eternal purpose for the renovation of mankind, is that "the stone cut out without hands" shall first destroy antichristian institutions, and then grow into a great mountain, that fills the whole earth; the Church of God, brought out from the mass of mankind by the hand of an unseen Builder, and already having accomplished a wonderful transformation of society in a large part of the earth, is that which is to accomplish the end. If we look at the New Testament, these intimations perpetually recur. It is when the Church of God shall at last "be one," in action as well as heart, that according to His own prayer in the seventeenth of John, "the world shall believe" that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer. He has told us, that it is by this instrumentality He means to work; and consequently, when He directed His disciples to go into all nations, and baptise them in His name, teaching them to obey His laws, He said—"I am with you always, even to the ends of the earth." These and similar expressions recurring perpetually seem to tell us, that the instrumentality

yet to be employed by Him, is the instrumentality He has ever used; that "the harvest" is to be gathered by reapers, and the reapers to be sent into the field by Him. So, when our Lord speaks of His Church, He tells us, that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened;" already society has been to a great extent modified by the influence of His people, and in their example and instructions they appear destined, according to that prophetic parable, to leaven the whole. We must therefore pray, not for the gathering in of God's harvest by miracle; but we are to pray, that He would "send forth labourers" to gather it in, according to His ordinary operations.

But here let us notice, that while the human reaper is necessary, it is not an instrumentality that is merely human, which will accomplish it. If the Governments of Europe, agreeing to renounce their rivalries one with another, and governing their subjects upon Christian principles, and therefore needing no longer the vast standing armies of Europe, which are a reproach to the Christian name,—not requiring them either to restrain their own subjects, or to seize upon any foreign prey, as the tiger darts upon the hare,—should employ henceforth the vast sums, which maintain these soldiers a burden on their countries, to form a great army of instructors for the world; and if the colleges and halls of Europe were to be crowded with those, who were busily teaching and being taught, so as to be sent forth to the heathen nations of the earth; after all, this manufacture of teachers might not send forth one such labourer, as would be owned of God. They who are to go forth, are those sent forth by Him, as we read in this passage; and if you look at the epistles to Timothy and to Titus, you will see that none are sent forth by Him, except those who know and love the doctrine of Christ, and Christ himself; who, sent forth indeed by Him, are the agents of His mercy to mankind. For these, then, for these exclusively, does Christ teach His Church to pray, when He says—"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

It must be done, my brethren, by Him. For, if ever such a band of men are to be raised up, as by training a native ministry may bring the nations of the earth to

Christ, there must be so much zeal and piety at home, as may give rise to such an instrumentality among the heathen. It were a chimeral hope, that young men of talent, devotedness and prudence, should go forth in numbers to evangelise the heathen, from a Church lukewarm and worldly and self-indulgent at home. Such a miracle would be greater than any yet wrought. But when the Church of Christ in each land rises in spirituality and in devotedness to its Master, then its younger members, catching the flame which is burning all around them, will be glad to devote themselves to the noblest work that can occupy human energies. He, therefore, must first prepare the Church, which is the mother of the Missionary; and then it is He, who by the same grace must inspire resolute and devoted men with the courage and the charity, that can make them willing to consecrate their best days, nay, all their days, to the proclamation of the message of mercy. He only can give young men the zeal, that shall make them disregard the opportunities of worldly accumulation at home; can prepare them to renounce the comforts of civilised society, and to place themselves there where life, though not passed under intolerable hardships, must yet have many privations, and where their great reward must be as distant as it is spiritual. He only can give them the patient, unswerving assiduity of such a reaper as Morison; the versatile talent of such a Missionary scholar as Carey; the readiness to brave danger and endure hardship, which the devoted Judson in Burmah manifested; the willingness to live and die for Christ, which Martyn possessed. God only can give these powers; God only can stir up this zeal. God only can send forth such men for the noblest work on earth.

And further, if this work is to be done, the Church of Christ at home must be taught that *it is* the noblest work on earth. It must compel the world to renounce its silly idea, that missionary labours are contemptible. Christians must themselves rise to all the greatness of this best of human works; see how man's happiness here, and his everlasting destinies are involved in this simple, but efficient agency; and learn to look upon the devoted missionary, who gives his intellect and his physical strength, his life and his affections, to the cause of humanity in giving them up to Christ, as just the highest example we can have of Christian virtue, and the best benefactor the world ever

witnesses. When the Church learns this, then will such young men be likely to go forth.

For this our Lord teaches men to pray: "pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." It must be no formal prayer, depend upon it; no cold supplication presented in our families and in our closets, because conscience compels us to it. Our hearts must be in the work; and we must exercise much confidence in God, and much confidence in prayer too. We must know that God hears prayer, and throw off from us the world's scepticism, that looks upon prayer as nothing but a decent homage; and we must feel by ten thousand experiences of our own, that prayer brings us our blessings, prayer enriches us, prayer makes us happy, prayer conquers our temptations, prayer subdues our hearts, prayer makes us love and serve our God. And then, with such prayers, we may see "the Lord of the harvest" sending forth His own devoted servants, to accomplish His great work in the earth.

Brethren, will you pray thus? Will you set yourselves to pray thus? It will do far more than money, far more than discussion, far more than any other means whatever. When God's people pray thus, the world's welfare will not be far off.

Brethren, will you pray thus? One congregation may bring many blessings even on distant nations, as well as on their own. Let each man feel, that he is bound individually to do it. Let us not wait till others do it; each man can do it for himself. Each man here has an untried power of prayer. Each Christian here may pray far more, and more effectually, than he ever yet learned to pray. And I ask you individually, my hearers, will you do it? My hearer, wilt thou do it? Whether others will do it or not, wilt thou fulfil Christ's precept? Why does He give us His laws? Simply, that we may obey them. Not to talk of them, not to discuss them, not merely to see their beauty and propriety; but to act according to them, to do His will, to show that we are His servants in reality as well as in name. When He says to every Christian in this assembly to-day, "Pray thou the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest," it means, my Christian friend, that you should pray for it; that you should pray for it from

your heart; that you should pray for it far more than for all the worldly objects, that ever awaken your anxieties, or employ your energies.

Let us pray thus; and God may send forth many, even in answer to those poor prayers, who may gather thousands of the ignorant heathen to all the light and the comfort, which are brought by the Gospel of Christ.

But that prayer, I am perfectly sure, will make you do every thing else, that the friends of missions can do. Pray thus, and every leaf that is ever presented to you, conveying the tidings of a saved idolater, will awaken your curiosity, and arrest your attention, far more than all the most elaborate histories of human wars and human crimes; and you will say as did that profound and blessed servant of Jesus Christ, President Edwards, "that for a long while, for many years, the narrative of the progress of the Gospel of Christ had been to him far pleasanter than all history besides." If you make such prayer, you will never withhold most glad and willing (not reluctant) contributions to a cause, that has won your hearts. Instead of being ashamed of the Missionary cause, you will be tempted to say of it, as Paul did of the cross, "God forbid that I should glory save in this." You will feel, that it is the cause of humanity, the cause of truth, the cause of wisdom, the cause of purity, the cause of peace, the cause of God, the cause of man; it is the one great cause, that gives effect to every other useful effort to ameliorate the condition of our species, and without which all others are helpless abortions.

Brethren, let us enter more into this great work. According to our blessed Saviour's direction, let us "pray the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." And according to that prayer let me beg you to act to-day. The vast Indian mission, the opening mission to China, demand your liberality much; and our Association has fallen back. We do not send now what we have sent in some past years. And I therefore ask you, for India and for China, both depending efforts tenfold above what our Society is capable of making, that you would as the servants of God, manifest your interest in this cause of Christ.

THE USEFULNESS OF AFFLICTION.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. S. ROBINS, M.A.

PREACHED AT CHRIST CHAPEL, MAIDA HILL, ON WEDNESDAY EVENING,
MARCH 12, 1845.

On behalf of the Indigent Blind Visiting Society.

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Corinthians i. 1.

THE qualifications of St. Paul for his high office in the Church of God, were not more remarkable than the ways by which he was prepared for eminent usefulness in their exercise. He was unquestionably a man of great natural endowments, of strong intellect, of great clearness and power of mind, and, at the same time, endued with conscientiousness, and with firm, noble, and generous feeling. His education had, as we know, been carefully attended to. He was brought up at the feet of the most eminent doctor of the Jewish nation; and it was no marvel that he made greater progress therein, than the main part of those of his own age and time. He had great experience also in affairs. He was a man whose character obtained for him high influence among his countrymen. He was entrusted with that which had been committed, probably, to few others; and was delegated to exercise powers which would have been committed to few, perhaps, besides himself. When he became converted, through the power of the Holy Spirit, working upon him so marvellously, at the very time when it seemed that his opposition against the Gospel was the very strongest, he was taken into a very glorious, but a very difficult service; and he was called henceforth to devote his life and all his powers, to Him who had dealt by him with such wondrous mercy. All his natural endowments, and all the qualifications which he had gotten by careful, mental, and moral discipline, were now to be devoted to that Lord, whom lately he had persecuted. But there was one way, whereby God was preparing to make him most useful in His Church; it was by a

told of all the apostles, and of St. Paul in common with them, that they were "delivered unto death;" that they were made a "spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men;" but he who was to stand forth pre-eminent among them for his labours and his services, for his usefulness and his success, was appointed likewise, to go deeper than any of them into the suffering and the bitterness of human life. Thus we read of him, that stripes and imprisonments were familiar to him; that he was often in shipwrecks and other perils; that he was well acquainted with weariness, and painfulness, and watchings, with reproaches and persecutions. At Philippi he was "shamefully entreated;" at Ephesus he "fought with the beasts;" at Iconium, at Antioch, and at Lystra, he suffered "affliction and persecution." But there were heavier trials than these, which he was called upon to endure; griefs which fell more heavily upon his spirit, and wounded his heart in a more tender part. There were divisions among the people over whom God had set him in charge; so that he might almost doubt whether he had not laboured in vain amongst them. And when there were men, like the members of the Church at Ephesus, who were growing in faith, who were adorning it by a holy practice, and St. Paul with gladness stayed among them; then the parting was a new source of sorrow, was another portion of the burden which he was bound to bear. And how weighty was this burden, and how sore was this trial, we may learn from his own expressions when, at Miletus, he sent for the

elders of the Ephesian Church, to bid them farewell; and so sorrowful was that parting, it well nigh brake his heart. There are other parts of his condition, especially that which regards his mysterious trial—the “thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him,” whereon we might dwell. But enough has been said, to prove that St. Paul was a man of great suffering; and his suffering is so prominently mentioned in his history, that we cannot but connect it with the preparation for his eminent usefulness in the Church of God.

Now this was one way—the way, indeed, which our text particularly suggests—by which the usefulness of his character was wrought out. It may be, that he was originally somewhat of a harsh and ungentle temper; but when God visited him with sorrows, and laid grief upon grief upon his own spirit, he learned to care for others; he learned to be more tender and more condescending, and to feel for their weaknesses, and for the unfavourable circumstances of their condition; so that, at last, he was ready to become “all things to all men, if he might win some.” And, especially, toward his brethren in Christ, he seems to have arrived at the most tender, loving, and devoted fellow-feeling; so that he was able to make their case his own, and to identify himself with them in all their trials, in all their distresses, and in all their temptations. “Who is weak,” he said, “and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?” But enough in regard to the character of St. Paul. It is set before us as a part of God’s teaching, it is presented to us in the record of Scripture, as embodying in the actions of a life, the lessons that were delivered by holy and inspired lips; so that we are bidden to follow Paul, in as far as he followed Christ.

Now we must especially mark, that he is our pattern in the use which he made of his afflictions; that he used them rightly; that is to say, he took them at God’s hand for the purpose intended, as explained by the very record of our text. And herein St. Paul may well stand as a pattern for all Christian people. Sorrow is no strange thing to them; as it is God’s school for spiritual discipline. It is God’s way of bringing his people to heaven, and preparing them for “the glory that is to be revealed.” We know that the general condition of mankind is not

happiness; for happiness has been forfeited by sin. And yet we may say, that the condition of the godly is oftentimes a condition of special outward trial. In the Old Testament we read, oftentimes, of those who served God, and enjoyed great temporal prosperity; nay, this, we may say, was, in a great degree, the promise of the Old Testament. But, under the new dispensation, God promises to us that which experience proves to be a better thing—He promises sanctified affliction. He promises trial and trouble, adversity and sorrowfulness of heart, all working for good and gracious ends, in bringing the servant of God into a more perfect acquiescence with the Divine will, and into a more near preparedness for God’s heavenly and eternal kingdom. And it is marvellous to see how, in this manner, the work of God’s grace is oftentimes first commenced in the heart. There may have been times of utter unregard, a long season of carelessness and of neglect, a time when the world was adding link after link to the chains of its bondage; a time when, though messages were sent in abundance, none seemed to reach the heart; a time when, though God’s ordinances were most mercifully administered, the soul got no benefit thereby, but it seemed as if it was always hard; as if there were to be no tokens of spiritual life. In vain were the faithful words of God’s ministers; in vain were the counsels of Christian friends; in vain were the prayers and the tears of pious parents; in vain seemed all the means of grace; until, in a season of special mercy, God, as it were, used yet one more effort, sent yet one more message, and strove yet once again, by His blessed Spirit, with the obdurate sinner. Conscience was at last awakened; the hard soil of the heart, which had been lying fallow from year to year, was broken up, and the seed was sown, and there might be perceived “first the blade, then the ear, after that, the full corn in the ear.” And how came that change? It was through sanctified affliction; it was through grace speaking to the heart of man, in the time of peril and sorrow. And in such a season, perhaps for the first time, we learn to realise our likeness to our Master, and we are brought into closer union than before; and it may be our first season of recognized union with Him, who was Himself “a Man of sorrows.” His words come to us with more

sweetness and more power. We love His ordinances; we walk in His ways; we desire to know Him better, to serve Him more worthily, because our condition has become somewhat like that which He took upon Himself.

The blessings of affliction are variously set forth, in a man's spiritual condition. I might say, that the first grace set forth in one who calls himself Christ's servant, is the grace of humility. Now, as long as men are prospering in the world, and seem almost to bend circumstances to themselves; as long as they seem to succeed in all that they set their hands on to do, it is very difficult to make them feel lowly minded. But when disappointment comes, and worldly failure, and a long period of unsuccesses, then the man learns the good, though bitter lesson,—his own weakness. Then, for the first time, it may be, he begins to be truly humble. He may have been in a certain sense utterly careless of all spiritual influences; I do not say altogether regardless of external religion, I do not say altogether indifferent about prescribed ordinances—but there was no life joined with the form; there was no life of God lightening and blessing the service. But when sorrow came upon him, then it seems as if, for the first time, he was taught the reality of religion. Then he was taught, that there is a spiritual world above and beyond the material world which lies so close around us, with which he has as much to do, and in which at least as many of his interests are lying, as in that sphere in which hitherto he has been alone conversant. He was not in earnest before, because this spiritual world was never brought within his view; but when God has taken away the pleasantness from earth, and the hope and expectation from earthly concerns, now a new sphere opens to him, and there is a reality in his thoughts of it; there is an earnestness in his pursuit of it. And so of that great principle of faith—"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." A man may speak of it fluently, and with exceeding accuracy, even before he has been greatly tried by trouble, but it is not till he has proved the truth of God by his own experience, it is not till he has found by the lessons of his own life-time that God is true, and that what passes in human condition is exactly consonant with what God reveals in His Word—in

short, it is not till a man has felt, as well as heard and seen, that he is able to bear testimony to the entire faithfulness of God, or to attain the fulness of that grace, which is correspondent thereto—that grace of faith, which shone forth so eminently in some of God's saints. And if there be a time, when the spiritual life especially makes itself manifest, it is in the season of prayer. I do not mean that cold, formal prayer (to call it by a name which does not belong to it)—that cold, formal prayer, which passes the lips, but with which the heart has nought to do; I mean the communion of the soul with God; I mean the drawing near of the spirit towards Him, from whom are all the issues of good and blessing. When a man is in sorrow; when he feels his heart heavy within him; when he looks about in the world, and looks within his own heart, and finds no stay, no refuge there; God's throne of grace is his refuge, and God's mercy-seat is the object whereto he looks for comfort. All his deadness, and mere form of prayer is ended, and he can say with David—"Lord, hear my cry; let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication." And thus it is that a man, first awakened from a worldly and carnal course, to the truth, the reality, the importance of religion, by the sorrows which God sends and sanctifies, makes his after progress. And he makes his advances towards eminent grace, by the same means; for you find in the main, that they who have stood forth as the great lights of the Church in the age in which their lot was cast—they who have left their names to be honoured and loved by the Church as long as it remains upon the earth—they, in short, who have been pressing forward, gamed their desire, and are among the vast multitudes around the throne of the Lamb, are those, who "came out of great tribulation." It is God's appointed ordinance; and though there are exceptions, (we would not deny it,) yet, for the most part, it is by sanctified sorrow that God calls His people into His kingdom, at the same time preparing them by His kind and gracious discipline, for the enjoyment of the inheritance. And blessed indeed it is, to mark how, by the influence of such means of God's appointment, and the other ordinances of His kingdom, the heart becomes gradually detached from this world, and learns to

garner up all its affections in the world to come, and to become gradually more and more indifferent about the unfavourable condition of earthly things, and more earnestly and intently anxious upon those which belong to heaven. His outward circumstances may be very poor indeed, and the man may hardly know from day to day how he shall provide for himself, and those who are dependent upon him, in those things which are needful for their common support. He is in a low estate, as it regards this world; but he has "treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through nor steal." He may have to bear mourning, and pain, and sickness; the body may be wasted, and broken, and shattered. He may have to endure sharp suffering; and the physician may bring him no relief, and no promise, no expectation of recovery. Now, then, he looks but the more earnestly to that city, where no inhabitant shall ever "say, I am sick." It may be God's will, to take away from him the love of earthly friends, so that he finds himself forsaken, and well nigh desolate; or, it may be, that their graves open for them one by one, and the circle in which was once his delight, is broken up and gone, and he remains a solitary man. And where shall he find comfort? and who shall bind up the wounds of such a stricken heart? It is He, who bade the widow not weep, though her son was dead; even He, of whom we may say, that He is still, to His Church, the friend that "loves at all times." And so we may say, in general, of a man's condition, though he may have many failures, though his plans may be defeated, and his cherished hopes should be laid in the dust, there is something to be learned from all his disappointments, and from all the amount of his unsuccesses. God is teaching him to build upon that everlasting foundation, where, if ye are resting the house of your spirits, "though the rains may descend, and the floods may come, and the winds may blow, that house shall not fall, because it is founded upon a rock."

We must take care, however, that we do not suppose affliction to have any irresistible power of its own, for the converting of men's hearts. We must take care that we do not look upon it as a means necessary to the producing this great and blessed end, of which we have spoken.

St. Paul sets forth very beautifully various dangers, to which a condition of sorrow is exposed. Thus, on the one hand, men may be tempted to "despise the chastenings of the Lord;" or, on the other hand, they may "faint." We must remember, that afflictions, like other means of grace, used rightly, may, through His infinite mercy, bring our hearts near to Him; so that we may say, "sowing in tears," we shall "reap in joy." The seed-time may be sorrowful, but the harvest may be full of gladness; God may "comfort us in all our tribulations," binding up the wounds which His own hands have made, and causing the work of His grace to go forward at the same time with all the dispensations of His providence.

But, you will observe—and that is, indeed, the main point to which I would direct your attention—the text speaks not merely of the comfort which we ourselves receive in tribulation, but the means whereby God qualifies us for the comforting of others. Let us never for an instant forget, that we are bound together by a very close brotherhood. "No man liveth unto himself;" we "are members one of another." If we belong to the Lord Jesus as the Head, we belong to one another as members. In proportion as we realise the one union, we must realise the other likewise. And, in truth, there is enough in our natural condition, to make us acknowledge, that whatever our condition, though our circumstances be ever so widely different, we, nevertheless, lie very near the one to the other. However we may be separated by our prosperity from those who are lying in the depths of adversity; however we may have been preserved by God's grace from many debasing sins of open notoriety, into which others have fallen, they are brethren still, and we may not look upon them as separate from us by anything essential to their condition or to ours. But if, in respect of natural condition, and the obligations of human life, we recognise the similarity between man and man, it is mainly to be brought out through the relation in which we stand to Christ. If we are brethren by our creation, much more, may we say, are we brethren by our redemption. Perhaps very few persons would be likely in any way to controvert the truth of this close relationship, which subsists between this vast household; and yet it is somewhat difficult to keep it in mind, when we are

resolutely occupied in getting or enjoying; when, as is the case with many of you, a large portion of life is occupied in important and engrossing pursuits; important, as far as the interests of this world are concerned; engrossing, as far as their natural effects are concerned. Perhaps, when some tale of sorrow is brought before us, we may be all tempted to give ear to it, and give relief; but we are not inclined to go out of our way to see it; we are not exactly inclined to make common cause with the sorrowful; to go to them as being in the flesh subjected to the same condition, and as being redeemed by the same precious blood, and therefore bound together by a likeness in our spiritual condition. Then if it please God to send sorrow to us; if it please Him, who appoints all the issues of human life, to remove from us some at least of those circumstances whereby we have been separated from the condition of all around us; the barrier to Christian sympathy is put out of the way, and we learn to look at those who are nearly related to ourselves, whose close kindred we might have been betrayed into forgetting.

It is a blessed effect, then, of sorrow which God appoints for ourselves, that it makes us take note of sorrows which others are suffering. And if it make us look to Christ's poor with a more tender regard, with a more deep and brotherly affection than hitherto, it is, at the same time, a sign that we are growing in acquaintance and in communion with Him, who, as to His human state, as to His state upon the earth, was a poor man, and who has committed to His Church for ever the care of the poor; nay, who has told us, that poverty shall be a continual dispensation therein, as if to give opportunity for the exercise of patience on the one hand, and for kindness and charity on the other hand. Perhaps we may all of us be concessions, that in a season of prosperity, when our hearts have been glad within us, when our way has been smooth, and our sky has been cloudless, we have not been very ready to sympathise with the distressed of those, whom God has brought down into affliction. We may listen to their tale, but not willingly; we may have gone to visit them, but not as a duty, which we were glad to perform. There might have been—nay, if we confess the truth, all of us must say, there has been—a degree of impatience in listening to the tales of the distressed, so long as we ourselves realised

little distress in our own circumstances. But when sorrow has laid its cold hand upon the heart which was high in hope; when God has stricken us; when God has brought us down into the depths of adversity; when we are sad and lonely; when the delight of our eyes is taken away from us; then it seems as if the forgotten brotherhood was brought out into all its strength and plainness; we had rather go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting; we had rather go into communion with those in grief, than with those who are in great gladness; we sympathise with a closeness of sympathy with others, such as for a time, at least, was interrupted. So it is that God teaches us a great lesson of usefulness in His Church. It was the very lesson which was taught to St. Paul, with such great effect, so long ago. And, indeed, if we in any measure follow the example of our dear Master; if we are in any way to be like unto Jesus, we must learn this lesson of sympathy. It is not enough, that we bestow benefit; it is not enough, that we contribute of our substance; it is not enough, that we contrive kind and charitable plans for the relief of the distressed. Our Master did not bestow blessings in a cold and distant way; but He sorrowed with the mourning, He entered into the griefs and the necessities and the infirmities of those whom He was ready to relieve. And so He would have us not only "rejoice with them that rejoice," but "weep with them that weep." And, in truth, this sympathy, of which I speak, and of which our Lord set us an example, is the common language of human nature; is the great secret whereby we may unlock all human hearts.

But we may say, that the effect of sorrow upon a really Christian person, is especially manifested in the ministering of spiritual consolation. He who in his own troubled times, has found God his refuge and his support; he who has found the promises of the Lord to be a stay and a staff in his own seasons of deep distress, is one who is "able to comfort those who are in trouble, by the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God." He remembers what light shone in upon his own dark condition, and he learns to speak to them with all the eloquence and persuasiveness of deep feeling, concerning Him, who is "the Day-spring from on high."

Now, dear brethren, I know that there

are those among you, whom God has visited from time to time, with sore distress and sharp suffering, and, at the same time, to whom God has ministered the consolations of His blessed Word. Now I exhort you, most earnestly, that you learn a lesson thereby; that you sympathise with the sorrowful; minister to them as to outward and temporal assistance, and that you especially do what you may by kind counsel and earnest words, and your own consistent example, in leading them unto Him, who is the source of all consolation for the stricken and broken-hearted. Remember, that the Scripture tells us, "love is the fulfilling of the law." All gifts, all suffering, all self-denial are in vain, without love. It is this grace which gives its colour and its value to every other. It is only if we have love to our Lord, and love to our fellow-creatures for His sake, that it is an offering which He accepts, because it springs from the principle which His own grace has engrafted. Let us remember, then, when faith worketh in us patience and experience and hope, that we apply the affliction which God sends us, not merely to our personal use, but to the increase of our service in the Church of God; to benefit others through our means; to make us useful to them; telling, that is, upon our social, as well as upon our individual state.

It needs not, perhaps, that I further lengthen out the exposition of this text, because I would immediately bring it to bear upon the object which I am desirous very earnestly to commend to your support. And I do so not rather, because it seems as though it carried out very excellently all that we have to desire in respect of our relief of the poor. When we look around us into the vast multitudes of afflicted and distressed people; when in the streets of this vast and wealthy town, we behold so many forms of suffering, we cannot but acknowledge that it forms a most pressing argument, that we may help as we may, and that we may mitigate as God has given us the means, this mass of distress. But among them, if it were permitted us to single out one particular case, whose condition is in some respects the most distressing, we would speak of *the blind*. Cut off from the sight of outward nature; never to behold the face of kindred or friends; to be separated from those channels and inlets of communion with all that are around us—the objects and the persons with which

in other ways we are familiar, every one knows to be a deep and sore distress. But when poverty is added, and when the man in his low condition, in the midst of daily and urgent want, has no means whereby to supply his own necessities; having strength of body, and yet inability to labour; who must not confess at there is a trial of human patience, second to no other? And is there any thing in the condition of a blind person, which makes it yet more painful? Surely there is. We are told, (and I believe upon sufficiently accurate data,) that there are in London between three and four thousand blind persons. Now we know, from our own acquaintance with the congregations gathered in our Churches, that there can be no such number as this—no, nor any conceivable part of it—assembled in any of the places appointed for public worship. They remain in their own abodes; the Lord's day comes round, and the Church bell may sound in their ears, but their infirmity, which has been their worldly hindrance in the week, prevents them from seeking the spiritual help they want, on the one day of the seven. They, of all men those who need to learn the lessons which are to be gathered in the house of God; they of all persons are those, who but for the help of such an institution are unable to find their way hither. Now this is called—"The Indigent Blind Visiting Society." The very name in a great measure explains the object. Its purpose is, to seek out those blind people, who, though greatly suffering, are not often to be met with in our public streets, and minister to their relief especially in these three ways.—It gives them the Bible, and provides those who will read it to them; it sends round week by week persons who shall conduct them to the house of God; and it furnishes to those who are in deep distress, a measure of temporal relief. Now, brethren, which of these objects is not a blessed one? which of these purposes are we not bound to further as we may? Has God's Scripture been to us a blessed book? have its promises encouraged us in dark seasons? have its precepts guided our way through life? Has it been, in short, of all the blessings that we have, the best and the most precious? Then in God's name, in the name of Him who gave the Bible for our blessing, let us carry it and read it in the homes of the blind. Do we count it for a good thing, that we may gather ourselves week by week, beneath a sacred roof, that we

may worship together, and partake of blessed communion in the Church of Christ? Then, let us fetch our dear brethren from the miserable homes throughout which they are scattered, and the neglected and obscure places in which their desolateness is hiding itself: and let us bring them, as it were, in the midst of us, that even the blind man may not be excluded from common worship, but that he may take his place, recognised and honoured as a Christian brother, and led, it may be, through our means, to Him, who so often, when upon earth, performed cures upon the blind. And then, if we really feel for their spiritual condition, it cannot but be, that we shall endeavour for many reasons to mitigate as we have the opportunity, the dire distresses to which a great many of the blind are exposed; and we shall be more earnest, surely, in doing this, because they are not the persons who are clamorous in soliciting our help. They do not even sit, like Bartimeus, "by the way-side, begging;" but the main part of the blind are to be found in their homes, seldom, it may be, crossing their own threshold; and except by the kindness of a friend, hardly finding their way into the public streets. And surely these are the very persons to help and relieve; these are the very persons to whom we should wish to make the channel of our charity flow more freely. Then let us, inasmuch as many of us are not able, through various hindrances, to minister in this way ourselves to the blind—let us remember, that there is an Institution asking for our help, and by means of which all these ends may be obtained. I should indeed be grieved at heart, if I thought it possible that I should urge upon you such a claim as this, and you turn a deaf ear to the entreaty. Nay, if I thought it possible, I should do you sore injustice. I need not add another argument drawn from the circumstances of this Society; I need not tell you, that its field is a vast one, and its resources are at present but very limited. When I ask you now to contribute, and to give your contribution year by year, I know by a long and pleasant

experience that I never can forget, that I am speaking to those whose hearts are never closed against the appeal for the sorrowful.

One word more. Brethren, most beloved, let me entreat you not to neglect this opportunity, which God has given you, of doing something for His cause, and for His glory. We know not how many more times the opportunity may occur to us. A death has occurred among us. Since I last met you face to face, a minister of Christ*—one who was faithful to his charge—one who loved the poor—one who laboured amongst them, as having the honour of his Master at heart—one who spent his strength and his years in the work to which he was called, is now entered into his rest; and you will see his face no more, and you will hear that kind and faithful voice no more in the flesh. But you will meet him again; you will stand beside him at the great reckoning day, before the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ; and then it will be asked you, whether his words, spoken in all truth and boldness, whether his example, holy and consistent, has wrought an effect upon your hearts. I dare not believe, that it has been unavailing. I would not for an instant believe, that his word spoken with all earnestness, and his example maintained with all consistency, have been in vain. Then let me say to you, if it be true, you are asked to give to a good and holy cause. It is a cause, such as he who is now in heaven, such as he who speaks to you from his grave, would have commended to you. I do pray most earnestly, that from the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, from the love of that Gospel which has been often delivered among you, you may maintain the cause now commended to your support with all largeness of heart. And above all, I pray that the blessing of the Lord God may rest upon you; that many of our poor blind brethren may be brought to a measure of worldly means, if it please God; and at all events, brought to the knowledge of His truth, that they may be saved with us in the great day of the Lord Jesus Christ.

EASTER SUNDAY.

MR. ADAMS, the eminent Lecturer on Astronomy, in his Lectures this week, discusses the much disputed question as to the computation of Easter Sunday this year, which he decides in favour of the 23d of March.

* The late Rev. John Sawer. A Sermon by him appears in No. 1, 170.

THE PROPOSED GRANT TO MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.

EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH OF THE HON. AND REV. BAPTIST W. NOEL, AT A MEETING HELD AT EXETER HALL, ON TUESDAY, MARCH 18, TO OPPOSE THE PROPOSED INCREASE OF THE GRANT TO MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.

THE Hon. and Rev. Gentleman, in moving the first resolution, said—He raised his voice that day against no secular or civil privilege which the Roman Catholic sought for, but against a grant, the effect of which would be simply this—to endow and sanction the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. He drew a very plain distinction between any encouragement of their secular interests, and the sanctioning of their doctrines. Everybody must see, whatever their opinions upon these two subjects, that there was a palpable difference between them. A person might, with the greatest good faith, support a bill such as that for the admission of the Jews to municipal honours, at the same time that on religious grounds he must protest against the payment of the Jewish Rabbis. Their numbers, their wealth, and their intelligence, might justify the one step; by the other, they would be sanctioning that doctrine which blasphemed their sacred Redeemer. Applying the principle to the Roman Catholics, he admitted their claim to civil rights, he admitted that those interests, which had been so cruelly invaded by the penal laws of other days, ought to be adequately protected, but he must protest against any legislative sanction of doctrines, which, as Protestants, they were bound to condemn. To do the first minister of the Crown justice on this head, he had not declared that he proposed to increase the grant to Maynooth College on the ground that it was right to sanction the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. The right hon. baronet, in the discussion which arose, on moving the address to the Crown, said that it was the intention of the Government to propose a liberal increase to the grant; that when in opposition, he resisted the motion made for the purpose of taking from the College of Maynooth the present allowance; that in doing so he stated that it appeared to him that an engagement had been entered into by the Irish Parliament, which was exclusively Protestant, to promote the education of the ecclesiastics of the Roman Catholic Church; that he considered he would only be acting in compliance with that engagement to supply increased means of education for those ecclesiastics in Ireland, and that it was not the intention of the Government to accompany that increase with any regulation respecting the doctrines of the Church which could diminish the grace and favour of the grant. From this it would appear, that her Majesty's Ministers intended to furnish the means of education to the whole priesthood of Ireland in proportion to the wants of the country upon the subject, however enlarged those wants might become. The proposition was this:—

"That the College, since its foundation, had greatly increased, and that it became necessary, in pursuance of an engagement to afford domestic education to the ecclesiastics of the Roman Catholic Church, to enlarge the grant to Maynooth in a corresponding degree; and that there should be no interference with the character of the education, but that the doctrines taught in that College should be purely and intrinsically Roman Catholic."

And this was founded further upon an engagement which it was said the Irish Parliament entered into with the Roman Catholic prelates and Roman Catholic community. Now, if that engagement could be made out, then perhaps, there might be some reason to pause ere they refused their sanction to the proposition of her Majesty's ministers; but if it could not be made out—If, on the other hand, it could be shown to be wholly fictitious, then did he say that it was the duty of the Protestants of this country to unite at this particular juncture, and protest against the proposed measure; and for this simple reason, that if this increased grant was not made in virtue of a compact, it must be made in virtue of a distinct principle, and that principle was, that it was right for Protestant senators to vote away the public money for the maintenance of Roman Catholic doctrines. A very slight reference to the history of the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth would serve to give them some very useful information respecting the nature of the alleged compact. In the first place, he found Mr. O'Driscoll, an able and honourable Roman Catholic, in his *Views of Ireland*, making this statement: that the College of Maynooth arose out of the circumstance of the state having declared war against France, by which the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical students were driven from the Continent; that representations were then made to the Government by the Roman Catholic bishops, which induced the Government to consent to indemnify those students for the mischief, by granting them the means of domestic education, and that the College of Maynooth was accordingly founded. In *Gifford's Life of Mr. Pitt* he found it stated, that the ill-timed and undeserved liberality of the Irish Government in erecting and endowing the Popish College of Maynooth was resorted to for the purpose of preventing young Papists intended for

the Church, from seeking a foreign education, which was conceived to have a mischievous influence upon their minds. Thus Mr. O'Driscoll referred it to a past act—to the fact of the ecclesiastical students having been driven by the war from the Continent; while Mr. Gifford referred it to a desire on the part of the Minister of the day, to withdraw them from the mischievous influence of a foreign education. Mr. Gladstone in his work upon the subject, said, that the founding of Maynooth College was originally undertaken by the Protestant Parliament of Ireland, in anticipation of what had since proved entirely fallacious, namely, that by domestic education a more loyal class of priests would be produced than if they were educated abroad. Here were three authorities, each stating that the grant was made with a certain specific object in view, but none of them giving the slightest intimation that the Minister meant that the grant to Maynooth College was to be permanent—still less to be co-existent with the Irish priesthood in every future generation. On the contrary, from all the statements which they made in reference to those specific objects, the inference was, that if the object was not accomplished, that grant ought to cease. If it were made—not to establish Roman Catholic doctrine, but to prevent the Roman Catholic priests from receiving a mischievous education abroad, and if it had been discovered that their education at home was more mischievous in its effects than that which they received abroad, surely the object for which the College was established must be allowed entirely to have failed. The reason on which the grant was originally founded having ceased, it should rather be inferred, that the grant ceased with the reason, than that it should be rendered permanent, when that reason no longer existed. Looking to the period at which this grant was made, he could discover nothing permanent in its character. By the 35th of Geo. III. (1795) it was enacted, that an allowance should be given, to build the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth, and the 10th clause declared, that the sum of 8,000*l.* should be paid out of the Supplies for the service of the year towards that object; but not one word was said about the permanent endowment of the establishment. Three sums were voted in the three successive years. In 1799 there was no vote for the college; and in 1800, the 40th George III, was passed, granting 8,000*l.* in these terms, viz:—"Towards defraying the charge of the establishment of a Roman Catholic Seminary for one year." Now, if granted for one year, who could have inferred that that amount was to be granted for 100 years? But even a stipulation of that sort or to that effect, if any such existed, could not have pledged this country. In the course of the legislation which followed, it must have been quite clear to all parties, that Government did not understand that the compact implied anything of that principle of extension and progress, which was now attempted to be secured to it. Thus in the year 1807, there was a small increase to the grant carried in the House of Commons, but, upon his accession to office, Mr. Percival reduced that grant. Now, if the doctrine of Parliament was, as it had been represented to be, that the grant to the college of Maynooth ought to be co-extensive with the wants of the Irish priesthood, once having increased it, it could not be diminished. When, in 1811, another motion was made to enlarge the grant, it was resisted, and the House of Commons determined that it should remain as before. During all this time, they would remember, that the wants of the Irish priests were increasing, increasing from the day when the allowance was first made, but yet, at this period, the Parliament refused an increase—a full proof that the engagement was not believed to be co-extensive with the wants of the Irish priesthood. It might, indeed, be said, that as the compact had been made—since 8,000*l.* had been voted for the education of the Roman Catholic priests,—their own resources for that purpose had been diminished in the same extent, and, depending upon that assistance, they were now in a worse position, than if the grant had never been made. In this, however, there was nothing but a reason for resolving, that, as soon as it was agreeable to justice, and by no means at a later period than justice might require, the Government should cease its connection with this grant. The Parliament had declared, by its acts, that the Government was not pledged to an extension of the grant, proportioned to the wants of the Irish priesthood. The announcement of that principle now, therefore, was entirely new, for neither Mr. Percival nor Mr. Wilberforce would have ever consented to sanction the Roman Catholic doctrines by providing for the permanent education of the Irish priesthood. He could recognize too, in the statements of Sir Robert Peel, the acknowledgment of this fact; for if Parliament had recognized the principle, that it was right for a Protestant Minister to vote money for teaching Roman Catholic doctrines, then Sir R. Peel would not have dwelt so exclusively on the fact of the engagement. The form of his argument alone showed that he knew

the principle to be a new one in the legislation of the country, or had at least never been brought fully before the public. It was the fact, that Roman Catholic priests in Australia, and the other colonies of this country, received salaries from Parliament; but that circumstance had never been well intimated to the public, or very long ago it would have been loudly protested against. They would bear in mind, too, that Mr. Gladstone, who justified the continuance of the grant of 8,000*l.*, as founded on a compact between this country and Ireland, on the proposition of an increase thereto felt it his duty to retire—proving thereby that, in his opinion, a new principle had been introduced.

He would now, therefore, remind the meeting, that the proposed vote, however small the results which might immediately flow from it, was made upon grounds on which they might expect to hear of the payment, by government, of the Irish Roman Catholic clergy, to be hereafter sanctioned. There was, he maintained, no conceivable difference between paying to educate the priests in Roman Catholic doctrines, and paying for having these promulgated to the people. The principles were identical; and if a Protestant Parliament was agreed to educate students in error, it was the same as if they supported them in disseminating the errors which they enabled them to learn. They must not delude themselves that this was a final measure, for so fully was he convinced that it was not so, that he pursued his argument on that very ground, and considered how far it was right that Protestant senators should vote away the public money to pay the Roman Catholic priests in Ireland. Such a course might perhaps be attempted to be defended by the precedent of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland; but the difference between Presbyterianism and Episcopalianism, however great, was insignificant when compared with the body of evangelical truth which they contained. Protestant senators knew full well that the sacrifice of the mass impaired the full glory, and darkened the efficacy of that sacrifice, which the Lord Jesus (Christ made for all men). They knew full well that the Roman Catholic Church would teach men to bow down to the statues and pictures of saints, who were mere men like themselves (Cherubs, and cries of "No.") Gentlemen might say "no, no," but he spoke of what he had seen. Why else, was it, that before the eyes of Europe, the dressed doll was produced? Why else, in that noble public building, in the heart of the capital, was the Roman Catholic taught the necessity of priestly absolutism, a doctrine calculated to interfere with the belief that the repentant sinner is pardoned by the exercise of faith in the Divine sacrifice? Protestant senators knew full well, that Roman Catholicism taught that men must confess their sins to their priests, thus resigning the liberties of Christendom into the hands of those whose aim was to institute a universal espionage—an espionage which was at the present moment exercising the most powerful influence in Italy and other countries. Protestant senators well knew, that in the Roman Catholic places of worship they might see the majestic figure of Mary, bearing the crown upon her head, and the Saviour as a little babe in her arms, manifesting the respective places which these several persons occupied in the Roman Catholic system—the one the majestic Queen of the Universal Church, the other the babe which she fondled in her arms. Protestant senators knew that the Romish Church taught, that after this life there existed a purgatorial fire, in which sins might be purified and refined. Protestant senators knew that the Roman Catholic Church forbade the use of the Scriptures to the laity, except under the sanction of their priests; and they knew full well that Roman Catholicism taught, that there was no salvation for those who were not within the pale of their Church. He trusted that Parliament—Protestant Parliament, would remember all this, and not by its decisions assist the promulgation of such doctrines. It had been defended on the ground of utilitarianism, but usefulness was no qualification of wrong. It had also been supported for the reason, that all who pay the taxes were entitled to have their religion supported in return; but to expose the fallacy of this, he need only remind them that the Socialist, the Jew, or the Deist were equally entitled to the benefit of this plea. The measure which they had met to propose had been resolved by a minister honourably distinguished by the determination with which he followed out the plans which he adopted. He was supported in his views by a large Parliamentary majority; and if the Protestants of the country were inert and silent, it was most probable that the measure would pass, and the principle thus become fairly recognised,—that the priesthood of the Irish Roman Catholic Church were to be endowed. It had been said that the priests would refuse such an endowment, and prefer relying on their flocks; but he could not but concur in the truth of a story recorded in one of Lord Brougham's speeches, wherein a man examined on that point said, that until the measure was passed they would to a man decline a State provision, but as soon as it had become law, they would to a man accept it. In such a country as this, when a minister undertook to deal with a question like that of Maynooth, he might be expected to act with secrecy, promptitude and resolution; and if they hoped to be successful in the present agitation, they must strain every effort to give publicity to the question, and show promptitude and firmness—endeavouring thereby to secure a combination so powerful, that Sir R. Peel should be obliged to give way before it. In conclusion, he had only to say, that he wished well to Ireland, to her Roman Catholic inhabitants individually, and that he should be delighted to see any measures successfully carried out for increasing the sources of her commerce, and draining her bogs, and ameliorating her social condition. Nothing would more gladden his heart (and as sincerely as Mr. O'Connell himself, did he wish for Ireland that she might be "great, glorious, and free," and that, with the exception of but one other land, she might become—

"First gem of the earth,
And first Isle of the sea."

The Rev. gentleman then moved the resolution, which was as follows:—

"That this meeting, recognizing the Holy Scriptures as the only sure rule and standard both of faith and practice, and convinced by the testimony of that Word, that the doctrines of the Church of Rome, as defined by the Council of Trent, embodied in the Creed of Pope Pius IV., and exemplified in its general practice and teaching, are 'superstitious and idolatrous,' and opposed to the best interests of society, and to the welfare of immortal souls, must regard all support and countenance given to such a system by the State as calculated to bring down the judgments of God upon this Protestant country."

A SERMON, BY THE REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.

PREACHED AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH, IN THE TOWER, ON THE MORNING OF
EASTER DAY, MARCH 23, 1845.

"And He saith unto them, Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen, He is not here: behold the place where they laid Him. But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter, that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you."—Mark xvi. 6, 7.

THESE words, as you will perceive by the context, were addressed by an angel to Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, who, as soon as the Sabbath was past during which our blessed Saviour lay in the grave, had brought sweet spices with the pious intent of anointing His body. Very signal and very beautiful was the devotedness of these women. They put to shame the stronger sex; for whilst even apostles were keeping themselves closely shut up "for fear of the Jews," they waited only for the Sabbath to be over, and then just as light began to dawn, hastened to the spot where their Lord had been laid—first at the sepulchre as they had been laid at the cross. It does not indeed appear, that these women differed from others of Christ's followers in entertaining any expectation of His rising from the dead; there was the same forgetfulness of His express prediction, that in three days He should return from the grave; the spices which they carried in their hands, proved but too clearly that they cherished no hope of finding Him alive. Yet if there be no faith to admire, there is great love to commend. Jesus was dead, and these women had attended Him to the tomb, so that even a warm affection might have been satisfied that there remained nothing more to be done; but they were not content; they thought they should still show regard to Christ, by hastening at the first break of the day to the sepulchre. And they knew (for they had seen,) that Nicodemus had "brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight," to embalm therewith the body of their Lord; how readily, then, would

an ordinary love have suggested, that they might have saved themselves the trouble and expence of any further anointing! Theirs, however, was not an ordinary love; and therefore, though they had to buy the spices, (for this circumstance is expressly noted by the evangelist, to show that their love did not shrink from cost,) they waited only till the Sabbath was past—for they did not think that love would excuse them from the observance of law—and then came with precious odours, to shed over the body of their crucified Master. And love had its reward. They came with the pious intent of anointing the dead, and themselves were anointed with the most fragrant tidings, that ever fell on mortal ear.

To their great surprise, they found the stone rolled away from the door of the sepulchre, and the anticipated obstacle to their admission removed. They entered at once; but in place of what they had expected to find—the dead body of Christ, lo! an angel is there in the form of "a young man clothed in a long white garment," the raiment of gladness. It was a token, as the early writers explain, that some great revolution had occurred, when an angel could thus be found in a sepulchre; the grave could no longer be what it had been before the Saviour died, if the bright inhabitants of heaven now tenanted the home, as it was reckoned, of the worm and corruption. And the angel accosted them, terrified at so unlooked-for an apparition, in gracious and encouraging words—words which we now take as the subject of our Easter discourse, and which we pray God to enable us so to handle and expound, that the understand-

ing and the heart may each alike find an appropriate portion.

The verses naturally divide themselves under two separate heads, though we shall attempt nothing more than a running commentary on the several parts; the first head includes the information given to the women—the second the commission with which they were charged. Let these be the general topics, to which we now address ourselves: the information—that of the resurrection of Christ; the commission—that of hastening to tell the disciples “that Christ was going before them into Galilee.”

I. Now if we are to furnish a sort of running commentary on the passage, the first observable thing is, the soothing character of the language which the angel employed, and the indirect, yet forcible manner, in which he recognises the devotedness which the women had displayed: “Be not affrighted; ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified.” You will not fail to observe, that the angel selects that title of our blessed Redeemer, which was one rather of ignominy and reproach, and which up to that time had seldom been given Him, except by His enemies, and the demons whom in the exercise of His miraculous powers He drove out from men’s bodies. “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?”—had been the question of Nicodemus, when he first beard of Christ; and the prejudice which the question implied, was shared by him in common with the great mass of the Jews: so that whatever it might afterwards have become, “Jesus of Nazareth” was then a name only of contempt. “Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews”—was the title which, according to St. John, Pilate placed upon the cross; and we feel that the proud Roman, in inditing the inscription, would select no terms but those of indignity and of scorn. And the angel adds a reference to the ignominious death which Jesus had endured—“Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified.” Oh! it was saying much for the devotedness of the women, to say that they were “seeking Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified.” It was saying that neither the contempt which was poured on Him in life, nor the shame of the cross which He endured in His death, had had any effect in weakening their attachment. They had loved him whilst living, though called a

Nazarene; and they love Him when dead, though crucified between thieves.

Al! my brethren! let us see whether in this our annual pilgrimage to the grave of our Lord, we have anything of that love, which shone so conspicuously in these three zealous women. It is so easy for us to keep Easter with high pomp and gratulation, coming to a tomb which we know to be empty, because we have often looked on death vanquished in his own domain; we may readily overlook the strength of that affection, which glowed fervently toward Christ while supposed to be dead—dead too with every circumstance of indignity and shame. When now the Church marshals (so to speak) her children in solemn procession, and leads them up with the early dawn to the place where her Lord was laid, there is the thorough consciousness that mourning is about to be turned into joy, and the remembrance of Christ dying as a malefactor is perhaps lost in the feeling of Christ having come forth as “the resurrection and the life.” What would it be, if as yet we only knew Him as “Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified,” and not as the Son of God, who stripped the grave of its victory? Is it not too much the fact, (if such expressions may be used,) that we tolerate the humiliation of Christ, in consideration of His subsequent triumph; just as we can overlook the circumstance of a man’s having been born a beggar, when we know him to have become a prince? We put up with, though we dislike the cross, because we know that it conducted to a throne. And yet what ought so to endear to us the Redeemer, as the shame and the sorrow, which He endured on our behalf? When ought He to seem so precious in our eyes, as when, “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” He “gives His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that pluck off the hair?” Oh! that heart has scarcely yet been touched with celestial fire, which is forced to turn from Christ in His humility to Christ in His glory, ere it can kindle into admiration and devotedness.

And here is the disposition, which will justify the expecting words of comfort and of peace; not where the throne (so to speak) is made to hide the cross, but where the cross is gloried in as the source of all hope, and fastened on with adoring piety. So that think not that you

necessarily prove yourselves true lovers of Christ, because with the return of this high festival of the Church, you can assemble like triumphing men, to meet the conqueror in the most stupendous of battles, and hail with enthusiasm "the Breaker," as He casts off majestically the dominion of death; rather inquire whether your love be so strong, that you can "come early" with the women "to the sepulchre," knowing only with them the poverty of Christ's life, and the ignominy of Christ's death. Oh! then only will the angel of consolation recognise an attachment that cannot be doubted, when he sees that you cling to the Saviour as "despised and rejected of men," and "bearing your sins in His own body on the tree;" then only will he whisper the gracious words, "Be not affrighted," when he knows that he may add, "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified."

But the women needed more than the quieting of those fears, which the apparition of an angel had naturally excited; they wanted information as to the disappearance of Christ's body. And this was quickly furnished; for the heavenly messenger went on to say—"He is risen; He is not here; behold the place where they laid Him." There is something remarkable in the reasoning, (if such it may be called,) which is employed by the angel; he calls upon the women to behold the place, where their Lord's body had been laid, as though its mere desertion were evidence enough of the fact of the resurrection. And so in truth it was, to all at least who, like the women, knew and considered the characters and circumstances of the disciples of Christ. The body was gone; either, therefore, it had been raised from the dead, or it had been removed for the purpose of deception. If removed, it could only have been by some of His immediate followers and adherents; His enemies would never have secreted the body, for their whole credit was staked on the being able to prove, that like that of any other man, it would see corruption and mingle with the dust. But could His disciples have stolen the body? What! the cowardly, recreant beings, who had all forsaken Him in the hour of His peril! They who were closely shut up "for fear of the Jews," could they have been daring enough to face the Roman guard, or subtle enough to elude

their vigilance? The supposition must indeed have been absurd in the eyes of the women, who came to perform a duty, from which apostles recoiled; and the supposition is equally absurd to ourselves, that men situated as were the disciples, who had displayed a timidity that was hardly to be reconciled with affection for their Master, should have devised and executed a plan, which would have been bold in the boldest, and which could scarcely have succeeded under the most favourable circumstances. He who can believe this, believes what requires greater faith than the resurrection itself. In believing that Christ was raised from the dead, I believe a miracle for which there was an adequate power; but in believing that Christ's disciples stole His body away, I believe a miracle for which there was no power at all. Hence the simple fact, ascertainable by the senses, that Christ's body had disappeared, was, and should be still, sufficient evidence of the resurrection. "Behold the place where they laid Him," is the same as—"Convince yourselves that He is risen."

It may not, however, have been only as proving the fact of the resurrection, that the angel directed attention to the deserted grave, but yet further, because there would be high topics of Christian meditation and comfort, suggested by the place which was hallowed by the body of our Lord. Whatever the degree in which the women may have been able to instruct and console themselves, in the contemplation of the empty tomb, to ourselves it is specially an Easter Day summons—"Behold ye the place where they laid Him." The Church leads you to that place; and, not satisfied with finding it deserted, though thereby convinced that her "Lord is risen indeed," bids you pause awhile, that you may gaze on that consecrated spot, and gather in the wonders with which it is haunted. "Behold the place:" scene of the mightiest prodigy ever known on earth. There the dead stirred itself, and the inanimate being sprang by His own volition into life. Behold, and acknowledge the divinity of Christ! "Behold the place:" in being emptied, earth and sea may be said to have given up their dead. The whole race of man rose from that narrow spot; for Christ was no solitary being, but the representative of the countless myriads of human kind. Behold, then, that you

may anticipate the general Easter of creation! "Behold the place:" seems it like what you have ordinarily supposed the grave to be—the home of all that is hideous and revolting? Rich odours are shed there; bright forms are sitting there. Behold, that you may learn what change hath been effected by the Redeemer for His followers. The grave has become a bed, and death but a sleep, to those who put faith in His name. "Behold the place" through your tears, ye who weep for the dead; that ye may learn to "sorrow not even as they which have no hope." "Behold it" in your fears, ye who shrink from dissolution; that ye may have boldness to face an enemy, who has already been overcome and bound. "Behold it" in your hopes, ye who look for "glorious things" hereafter; that ye may increase your confidence in a Forerunner, who won such a triumph, that He might open to His people the kingdom of heaven. Ay, and "behold the place," ye who care little as yet for the soul and eternity. Think not that He, who could thus conquer in dying, may be neglected with impunity, now that He "ever liveth at the right hand of God." Forget not, that God "giveth assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Christ from the dead," of His having "appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness." "Behold," then, "the place where they laid Him," that ye may flee to Him as a Saviour, before He appears as an avenger.

And thus might we gather all descriptions and classes of persons round the deserted sepulchre, and make it preach to them the truths, which they have most interest in knowing and remembering. So interwoven is the fact of Christ's resurrection with the whole scheme of our redemption—so dependent is the entire Gospel, whether for its truth or its worth, upon its "not being possible that He should be holden of death," that if we could but fix attention on that empty grave, we should give hope to the desponding, constancy to the wavering, warning to the careless, comfort to the sorrowing, courage to the dying. And therefore we pray you not to be content with having come up in quest of "Jesus which was crucified," and with having heard the inspiring tidings—"He is not here; He is risen:" spend yet some por-

tion of this hallowed day, lingering at the tomb in holy meditation. Solemn thoughts may steal over you, and brilliant visions may pass before you. That empty vault is full of sublime and stirring and glorious things—things which escape the mere passer-by, but present themselves to the patient inspector. Oh! linger there awhile; and you may find how good was the counsel of the angel to the women—"Behold ye the place where they laid Him."

II. But we are now brought, in our commentary on our text, to the considering the commission with which the women were entrusted. The glad tidings of Christ's resurrection were not for themselves alone; and the angel directed them to hasten at once, and give intelligence of the glorious fact. Were not these women highly honoured? were they not well recompensed for their zeal and love in coming to the sepulchre? They became apostles to the apostles themselves; they first "preached the resurrection" to those who were to preach it to the farthest ends of the earth.

And what a breaking forth of long-suffering and of forgiving love is there in the fact, that the tidings were first sent to "the disciples" of Christ—those very disciples who had "all forsaken Him and fled!" Christ indeed did not think little of having been deserted, but He knew that His disciples sorrowed for their fault, that they loved Him sincerely, however overcome by fear; and He gave a pattern of His readiness to forgive and to welcome the backslider, whenever contrite of heart, in sending to them the first tidings of His resurrection.

And this were but little. The disciples, as a body, had indeed played the coward; yet they had rather avoided standing forth in His defence, than shrunk from Him in open apostacy. One, however, there was, who had gone far beyond the others; who had denied His Lord, denied Him thrice, denied Him with all that was fierce and blasphemous in expression. Alas! for Peter; he may not class himself with the other disciples. His case differs widely from theirs; and if Christ send a gentle message to His followers in general, how can Peter ever dare to apply it to himself? Oh! the gracious condescension of Christ!—for indeed it is His voice, which must be recognised in the voice of the angel. "Go

your way; tell His disciples, *and Peter*." Why this special mention of Peter? Is he not included among the "disciples?" and why, then, must he be named by himself? Ye know the answer to these questions: Peter, as the greatest of sinners, was the most likely to fear that that risen Lord would pronounce his own rejection; but Peter had "wept bitterly" for his sin, and therefore was Christ eager to assure him that He was ready to pardon and embrace him. Those two words—"and Peter"—thrown into the commission, are, I might almost say, a Gospel in themselves. We know how possible it is, that there may be one in the present assembly, who scarcely dare rejoice in the Saviour's resurrection, because oppressed with the remembrance of his own share in the Saviour's crucifixion. He may be able but too truly to charge himself with having "crucified to himself the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame," through some foul and reiterated denial, which, like that of Peter, may have pierced deeper than the nails and the spear of the Roman; and though, like Peter, he may have heard the crowing of the cock, and conscience-stricken have "gone out and wept bitterly" for his sin, he is yet unable to appropriate the promises of the Gospel, or to think that they extend to one so fallen as himself. In vain does there break on such a man this high festival of the Church; in vain is there passed from tongue to tongue the animating confession—"The Lord is risen, the Lord is risen indeed!" What is Easter to a man, who seems to himself to have re-enacted, through his own dark act, the doleful tragedy of Good Friday?—what but a day rather of fearfulness than of gladness, forasmuch as the resurrection of the Crucified does but prove the power to crush every enemy, as well as to protect every friend? Nay, but if thou art Peter in every thing else, thou shalt be Peter also in Christ's Easter remembrance. Christ is not risen to drive away the backslider, but to tell that backslider of a love, which is strong enough for his forgiveness. He asks only such a repentance as loses not sight of atonement; not the repentance of Judas Iscariot, which, bitter and deep, had in it no element of faith in a propitiation for sin; for Judas, as the ancients remark, remembered the price at which he had sold his Lord, but forgot the price at which his Lord bought him. Christ asks

only that "godly sorrow," which having given tears for the commission of a sin, meekly recalls that He gave His blood for its pardon; and He is ready, with the good Samaritan, to bind up the wounds, pouring in the oil and the wine.

If, then, there be some of you, who cannot hide from themselves, that like cowards they have shrunk away from confessing Christ before men, oh! let them not, if sensible of their sin and desirous of being bolder for the future, imagine that Easter brings with it no tidings of joy. It was to such as these, that with the early dawn the angel sent the gracious and encouraging message of the sepulchre. And if there be one, who feels that he has gone beyond others in guilt, that he has approached nearer to open apostacy, or even reached that fearful extreme, and to whom therefore, notwithstanding his penitence, there is little that is comforting in a kind word to "disciples," who if they have actually deserted, have never fiercely denied their Redeemer; ay, it should go to that man's heart, and inspire it with hope, to hear Peter mentioned by name, lest Peter should suppose himself excluded. "Go, tell His disciples"—that is much; but who shall measure the riches of His grace?—"tell His disciples, *and Peter*, that He goeth before you into Galilee!"

It remains only that we consider for a moment the promise, with which the text concludes: "He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you." It was probably in Galilee, that our Lord showed Himself, as is commemorated by St. Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, to "above five hundred brethren at once;" and there was an appropriateness in the selection of Galilee, forasmuch as Christ was likely to be known to numbers there, He having been brought up in Nazareth, a city of Galilee, having wrought His first miracle in Cana of Galilee, and having laboured most abundantly in Capernaum and the neighbouring coasts. Moreover, as Galilee was called "Galilee of the Gentiles" from its proximity to the territories of the heathen, this fixing the place of meeting on the confines of Judea, might be intended to mark that all men had interest in the fact of the resurrection, or that the blessings of the new dispensation were not to be restricted as had been those of the old. And if it were only to the then

living disciples, that the promise pertained, of meeting their risen Lord in Galilee; assuredly some place there is, of which it may be said to the Church in every age—"There shall ye see Him." "He goeth before you"—is, and always will be, the message to the Church. Christ, as the forerunner of His people, hath passed within the veil, not that He may permanently hide Himself from them, but that He may "prepare a place," where they shall see Him "face to face," and "know even as they also are known." It is the hope of the Church, her joy and her very sustenance, that she shall yet behold Christ "as He is;" not merely as she now beholds Him, with the eye of faith, whether on the cross or on the throne, but with the eye of sense; purged indeed and purified, yet as actually with the corporeal organ, as the five hundred brethren, when they gazed on Him in Galilee. Blessed be His name, that as it was not in His individual capacity, but as our head and representative, that He "died and rose and revived," so was it as our head and representative, that He ascended up on high, and entered into heavenly places, not made with hands. "There shall we see Him," if indeed we "be faithful unto death," and "fight a good fight," and "witness a good confession." Die we must; be gathered to our fathers we must; but the grave, as we have seen, is an altered place. Angels keep watch there; and "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." It is not on Easter Day, or all days in the year, that we can look with dread and apprehension on the dissolution of the body. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." There broke this day a light upon the tomb, which is not again to be extinguished by all its darkness and all its terribleness. "In my flesh shall I see God." In that

very body, which I resign to corruption; which is thrown aside as a dishonoured thing; freeing himself from which, the soul rises towards the perfection of her being:—in that very body shall I behold Him, who created me and redeemed me. Oh! for that faith now, which shall be exchanged for sight when "the trumpet shall have sounded, and the dead been raised incorruptible!" "Whom having not seen, we love; in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." It is to them who love Christ, though yet invisible, that He shall hereafter show Himself in His benignity and His majesty. "Every eye," indeed, "shall see Him; and they also that pierced Him" shall look upon Him; but those alone, who have kept Him in sight whilst pilgrims in the Galilee below, shall be with Him in the Galilee above, to behold the glory, which hath been given Him of the Father.

Let us strive, then, to carry away from the present lofty commemoration, from "the place where they laid" the body of our Lord, fresh motive to that mortification of the flesh, that walking by faith, and that following after holiness, which as the alone sufficient evidences of our being now "risen with Christ," are the alone clear earnest of our entering hereafter into the light of His presence. Let us not be here ashamed of "Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified;" and neither will He be ashamed of us, when He shall "come in His own glory, and in the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels." Then, year after year may pass rapidly away; but what is it to us, that life with its attractions, its pleasures, its possessions, fast approaches its limit? It is life with its trials also, its sorrows, its dangers, which is being so quickly exhausted. We shall lie down to rest in a grave, hallowed by having once held the body of Christ; we shall wake up to "be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

LIFE, A STATE OF DISCIPLINE.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.

PREACHED AT CAMDEN CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
MARCH 2, 1834.

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.—Colossians i. 12.

You will often meet, in the perusal of Scripture, with references to our present state of being as most strictly preparatory to another. The general representation of the Bible appears to be, that this earth is not only a scene of probation, but that it is, yet further, a scene of moral discipline; and that by the schooling and training, of which we are here made the subjects, we become fitted for the business and enjoyment of a higher sphere. And there are few points in theology, which, for practical worth, deserve more to be impressed on men's minds than this—that over and above the obtaining the right of admission to heaven, there must be obtained a meetness for its possession. It is quite evident, that whatever the scenery and characteristics which we ascribe to the future home of the saints, we must suppose ourselves endowed with just those organs and faculties, which shall be effectual for appropriating the beauty and the blessedness; otherwise (to use a common expression) the whole would be thrown away on us, and we could be nothing advantaged by the splendid things and the lovely, which might girdle us around.

The most casual and thoughtless observer must often be struck with the adaptation of the earth to the creatures who inhabit it, or the adaptation of the creatures to the earth which they inhabit. It is this adaptation, which makes the eye, for example, a more powerful witness to the existence of a God, than any one, or all, of those magnificent worlds which we see spangling the firmament. It is perfectly clear, that the eye has been constructed with a wise reference to the properties of light, or that the properties of light have been regulated with a view to the mechanism of the eye. If you did not think it incredible that the eye might be a chance production, or that light were a chance production, you would require an

infinitely greater degree of credulity before you could think that one chance production might be exactly fitted to another chance production. The proofs which we search for, when wishing to demonstrate from the visible creation the existence of a Creator, are evidences of design, seeing that, in proportion as we detect evidences of design, we charge absurdity on the theory that the world around us is not the work of an intelligent Creator: and it is impossible to imagine a greater evidence of design than is put forth by the eye, inasmuch as if an organ were to be constructed which were adapted to the properties of light, the eye is precisely that organ; so precisely indeed, that if in the least respect altered, it would become unfitted for the purposes of vision. Thus in the mechanism of the eye, a mechanism which distinctly shows that the eye was intended for the light, or the light for the eye, you have a greater witness to the intelligence of the Creator, and you have a greater evidence of design, than astronomy can ever find in all her marchings over unlimited space. But our business is simply with the adaptation of man to his present dwelling-place, or the adaptation of the dwelling-place to those who inhabit it; and this adaptation must force itself, we say, on the most unobservant. You will all admit, that man seems to have been made on purpose for the earth, or the earth for man. If our organs and feelings were not exactly what they are, or if the objects around us were not exactly what they are, we must believe, that in either case we should be quite unfitted for a residence upon earth. There must be the adaptation of the dwelling to the inhabitant, or of the inhabitant to the dwelling; otherwise, however the bare existence may be possible, it is evident that enjoyment would be wholly out of reach. And certainly, observing how the adaptation

has been attended to in our present state of being, we might naturally conclude that it will not be neglected in our future state; that, whatever the blessedness of heaven, we shall be required, in some sense, to be made meet for its enjoyment. If heaven at all differ from earth, it is clear that man would gain little or nothing by the being transferred from the one to the other without the passing of any change on his powers and dispositions. You may tell me, that I am to be translated at death to another planet, and that I am there to mingle with another and a nobler order of beings; but unless you also tell me of some great alteration which shall be passed upon myself, there is nothing to allure me in the opened-up prospect. If I were suddenly placed on some far-off star, with exactly that apparatus of organs, and faculties, and feelings, which fits me for dwelling upon the earth and for companionship with men, the likelihood is that I should be so completely and in every sense a stranger, so altogether out of my element, that it were not easy to imagine a greater dreariness and wretchedness than would fall to my portion. To the natural inhabitant of the star, its landscapes might be those of an exquisite and unrivalled loveliness, but possibly mine eye would be quite unadapted to the scenery, and there would be presented to me nothing but a blank or deformity; the natives of the planet might be charmed with sounds which enchant them with their melodiousness, but mine ear would not be constructed so as to receive these modulations, and the music would be to me only harshness and discord; and however there might be circulating through all the hosts of the inhabitants the charm of a choice and intimate friendship, there would be nothing in common between ~~me~~ and them, and the difference in nature would prove an insurmountable barrier to all that is pleasing and profitable in intercourse. Thus it is only so far as with change of scene we suppose change of organs, there can be any thing attractive in the prospect of removal from the earth to a wholly different habitation. The idea of happiness pre-supposes necessarily that adaptation of the being to the sphere, on which we have spoken, and which is so clearly to be traced in our present existence; and unless there be this adaptation, you must all perceive, that the dwelling to which we are transplanted might be one on which

God had expended far more of the riches of His might and contrivance than on that which we left, and that its tenantry might vastly out-do human kind in glory and intelligence, but that, in place of being advantaged by the exchange, we should just pass into a condition of desolation and misery, such as we have never experienced while inhabiting this lower creation.

Now though we have fetched our illustration from the adaptation of our bodily organs and senses to the scenes in which the Almighty hath placed us, it will readily be admitted, that if the discourse turn on what may be called the moral adaptation, there will be equal force in the argument. There must be a correspondence between the dispositions and the pursuits; the objects presented as the sources of pleasure must be exactly those which the desires solicit; otherwise it were absurd to speak of happiness, or to expect anything else than uneasiness and dissatisfaction. If an unholy man were translated, with no assault made on his unholiness, to a state of being whose enjoyments were those of holiness, he would be in a position of the same kind as that of an individual who might be removed to another planet with the organs and senses which are only constructed for this. There would be manifestly just the same want of adaptation between the powers and objects of enjoyment, and consequently just the same feeling of having passed into an uncongenial element, and of the thorough incapacity for entering into the employment, and sharing in the joyousness, of those who were at home in the new and strange territory. And thus it ought to commend itself to our minds, as one of the simplest of truths, that if we are to be admitted into heaven as the place of happiness, we must be subject, while on earth, to the processes of a strictly moral discipline; and that inasmuch as, on our calculation, the occupations of the saints in their everlasting home will be such as require cleansed and remodelled dispositions—such, in short, as could never be pursued, unless there be a renovation of nature, it must be essential to Paradise proving anything else but a waste and a wilderness, that, in the language of our text, we be made “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.”

Now we think it our business, in addressing a mixed congregation, to bring to bear on the subject-matter of discourse a

variety of argument, so that if possible there will be something to interest the different classes of the audience. If we could believe of this present assembly, that it were wholly composed of individuals receiving and acting on the scriptural doctrine, that this life is designed as a state of discipline for the next, we should feel that we had nothing to do but enlarge on St. Paul's words, and explain what that meanness is, of which he makes mention. But we cannot put from us the conviction, that there are numbers of you, who never regard the present world as a school in which men are to be trained for another; and we feel that it would be vastly more for the moral benefit of our hearers, if we could so place before them this fact, that it should commend itself powerfully to the understanding and conscience. We shall, therefore, in the first place, pursue yet further the train of thought which was opened by our introductory remarks; in other words, we shall examine the fairness, or rather the necessity, of the supposition that our present state of being is one of discipline and preparation for our future. We shall then, secondly, inquire into the justness of St. Paul's statement, that he had been made "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

I. Now we have spoken of the adaptation which must subsist between the capacities of a being and his condition, in order to his being fitted for its occupation and enjoyment; and we suppose you will readily admit, that if our nature did not correspond to our external state, there would be no possibility of any such thing as human life and human happiness. We will recur to our former illustration. We consider that no one will deny, that a man translated suddenly to another planet, and carrying with him only the organs and senses which are constructed for this, would be incapable of enjoyment, and, in a very high probability, incapable of life. Whether or no his powers would accommodate themselves by degrees to the new state of being, we are clearly unable to determine; but if there were a difference between the planets, it is most evident, that unless thus accommodated, his powers could not qualify him for residence in the scene to which he had been transplanted. And when you admit this, you admit all which we are concerned to make good, namely, that previous discipline is neces-

sary in order to the fitting the individual for the supposed change of habitation. But if it be allowed, that at death we must pass into a new state of existence, may it not be said, that we shall then occupy circumstances similar to those of the man thus compelled to shift his dwelling-place to another planet, and that unless, therefore, we have been in some way prepared for the scene upon which we are to enter, we shall be as unfit, whether for its joys or its business, as though transported without any change in our nature, to a world which is void of all objects answering to our appetites, senses, and affections? We press this consideration on you, as one which, if you will only allow it to have its just weight, is strikingly calculated to make you pause in your career of levity and worldly-mindedness. You will hardly so degrade yourselves as rational creatures, as to profess a belief and expectation, that the future is to be in every respect like the present; so that hereafter there shall be the same objects of desire and pursuit, as here allure and engross the great bulk of mankind. You never think of an avaricious man carrying with him across the border-line of eternity the passion for accumulation; at least you never think of his carrying it with him as a passion, in the gratification of which his delight is to lie, though it is far enough from impossible that he will carry it with him as a passion, whose unsatisfied gnawings shall constitute one grand item in his torment. You never think of the voluptuous man as following that pleasure in the next world which he is seeking in this; if his voluptuousness go with him into the future, you think it must go, not as a principle in the obeying of which there shall be delight, but in the denying which there shall be agony. And if you find yourselves necessitated to admit, that there must be at death such a change in human capacity and human condition, that present objects and desires will be no longer attractive, or, at least, no longer attainable, you cannot deny, that unless you experience a thorough alteration or renewal of character, you will be as distinctly incapacitated for the particular life of those who gain happiness hereafter, as you would be for a sphere of existence constructed for beings of a different nature.

And what we wish you yet further to observe is, that over and above the ascertained necessity for a renewal of character, you are surrounded by evidences in

the whole analogy of nature, that the present life is designed as a state of discipline for the future. You observe, men are not born into this world with all that equipment of energies which they will need when arrived at maturity : on the contrary, their infancy is a state of thorough weakness and feebleness ; and all the early years of life serve only for the culture and development of those faculties, both physical and moral, which they are to bring into exercise when taking their due place in human society. We are so accustomed to this appointment of Providence, that we give it not the attention which it signally deserves. But you may at once perceive, that if there were in any case a deviation from this appointment, so that a human being were sent into the world in the full perfectness of manhood, so soon as there be consciousness, such a being, in spite of all the energies with which he is endowed, would be well nigh as helpless and bewildered, and unfitted for the business of matured life, as though born an idiot. It is not enough that he possesses a certain amount of power, whether of mind or body, unless he has gone through the training of infancy and childhood, so that the power has been gradually acquired, or gradually brought out ; he would be, for a long while at least, nothing better than a nursing as to all the affairs of a stirring community, and be no more qualified, but far more dangerous, than the palsied in body, and the vacant in mind, for any of those offices which devolve in mature age on the ranks of society. Is it not, then, a most fair expectation, that forasmuch as our present life may be considered to bear to our future exactly that relation which the infancy of this state of being bears to its manhood—is it not, we say, a most fair expectation, that we are placed on earth in order that we may be prepared for a higher place in creation ; yea, and that if there be a frittering away of the opportunities of that which we are bold to call the childhood of our immortality, so that we pass into eternity uneducated for its lofty concerns, we shall be just in the condition of the full-grown man, launched upon life without any of the teachings of instruction, or habit, or experience, and thus be fitted for no other part throughout the broad ages of the immortality of our species, but that of furnishing an exhibition of moral shipwreck, and telling out to the intelligent universe, that the attempt

to set aside God's ordinances of discipline would issue in nothing but everlasting ruin—perfect in one thing, but that one thing wretchedness ?

We think it thus a simple, as well as a just idea, that our being placed in this life in a state of discipline for another, is a providential dispensation, just analogous to that in which, throughout infancy and childhood, we are placed in a state of discipline for mature age or manhood. The arrangement is wonderfully similar ; and even if we were devoid of direct information on so important and interesting a matter, it would be something better than an ingenious conjecture, if, from observing how in the first years of life we are disciplined for the after, we suppose it to be the design of the Almighty, that the present theatre of our being should serve as the school-house in which we may be trained for another and a nobler. And we cannot pass on from this illustration of our subject, without endeavouring to bring it home to your feelings. It is quite true, that children are made dependent on their parents, so that the parents instruct the children, and not the children the parents ; but there is a beautiful reciprocity in this matter which ought not to be overlooked in Christian households. If you would only look on childhood as presenting an exact image of our race, viewed relatively to the after state of being, you might yourselves be educated by all those processes of education which you either apply or observe. As you watch the development of powers ; as you prescribe and enforce rules for correcting the judgment, improving the memory, and strengthening the principles, and thus labour at preparing the yet feeble and uncultivated mind for the duties and pursuits of the full-grown man, you may well consider, that all which goes on under your guidance and inspection is just what ought to be going on with regard to yourselves. Infants as ye are, who have yet to come of age, you need the very same development of powers, and the very same strengthening of principles, in order that, in the yet unroached maturity of being, you may be fitted for that station in the grander state of the universe, which God in His mercy designs for mankind. And therefore, while teaching children, you ought to be yourselves taught. There should flow in upon your soul from all that business of instruction by which you affect to fit the young for the counting-

house, for the bar, or for the pulpit, a continued memorial of your own moral position: and viewing in the discipline which is needful for childhood, an accurate miniature of that which is requisite for yourselves, as still only at the outset of your being, you should be stirred by the machinery of schools and universities to examining whether you advance in the training for immortality. It is thus that the benefits you confer would tell back upon yourselves, and that the children whom you instruct would act as your instructors.

We cannot but think, that whenever God sits in judgment on the families of this earth, one aggravating circumstance in the long catalogue of sins shall be fetched from the constant exhibition of their own state and their own wants, which is presented to men in the daily history of their households. Yea, we are bold to think, that with hundreds and thousands "the books" which are opened, and out of which they shall be condemned, may just be the school-books of their children; for, if it be of the first moment to our well-being hereafter, that we receive and act upon the truth that our present life is designed as one of moral discipline for the future, then whatsoever in the arrangements of Providence is calculated to present this truth to our notice, and to force it on our attention, will undeniably prove the stoutest witness against us at the judgment. If we pass across this scene of probation without any striving after meetness for the inheritance which may be expected in the ripe years of existence—and if childhood, in all its imperfection and in all the apparatus which it needs for the educating latent powers and forming right principles, be an image the most accurate of man's estate in this life, when taken in conjunction with the sentiment of the text—who will pronounce it an overbold thought, that education (we mean education in itself, the dealing with young years as the time of preparation for maturity,)—that the education of sons and daughters may bring down the very sternest of condemnation on the parents; and that, just because in applying himself to the education of the young, the man has had constantly before him a memento of what he ought to do as the heir of eternity? Why, sir, the equity of his being given up to torment may be demonstrated from the fact, that he gave attention to the opening days of his off-

spring; and the simple, common-place circumstance that he sent his children to school, prove to the on-looking universe the thorough justness of God's dealings, when, as having neglected his own discipline for an endless hereafter, he is sent down to the prison and the fire at last.

Now, it were not difficult to add other strong reasons why our present state of being should be regarded as one of discipline for our future. We ply you with facts, which, if the Bible were never put into your hands, give at least a high probability, that you are placed on earth as on a stage of preparation for the perfect life of good men hereafter. You plainly admit the force of the argument, that when the truth has been enforced by variety of methods, we shall be held the more inexcusable if it never become influential on our practice; we might, then, pursue yet further our train of inquiry, and multiplying our proofs from analogy that this life is the discipline time of the next, leave you more and more bound, as calculating beings, to strive after preparation for the full manhood of our being. But we are pressed by the remainder of our subject, and have only time to apply practically our remarks on the adaptation which subsists between the nature of man and the world in which he dwells, just as we have done in the case of the child in the season of education. We have not feared to introduce your children's books into the solemn proceedings of the judgment, and neither shall we fear to introduce your corporeal senses, and to assert you condemned by your taste, and your eyesight, and your hearing. We dwell on the correspondence which subsists between our organs and the objects which answer to them in the surrounding creation. If light were not exactly what it is, the eye would be useless; and if the air were not exactly what it is, the ear would be useless: and from this correspondence we deduce a great moral lesson, even that there will be needed in our future state of being the same adaptation of the nature to the scene, which is so essential in our present to enjoyment, or rather to existence; and that consequently, forasmuch as we all expect a great change in scene, we are bound earnestly to seek a great change in nature, if we would not throw ourselves into eternity unprepared for all except its fires, which are "quenched not." And what, then, shall bear a stronger testimony

against us than the eye or the ear, if we strive not to be disciplined ere ushered into the new state of being? We can imagine to ourselves the man questioned at the judgment, as to his means of ascertaining whether God had placed him, while on earth, in a state of moral discipline. He may have had slight opportunities of what is termed instruction; but we can believe him compelled by the apparatus of his senses, to hold that he might have ascertained the character and design of his earthly condition. These senses assured him, that he was constructed with a distinct view to his residence on earth, and that, if differently constructed, such residence would have been impossible: they told him, therefore, in language which, if misunderstood at all, must have been wilfully misunderstood, that if he were to find happiness in a different sphere of being, he must enter upon it with a different state of powers; and thus they urged him to inquire after the mode of a moral renovation,—that thorough change of nature, apart from which, they seemed to tell him, he must look for no enjoyment in a thorough change of dwelling. It is enough, then, in order to his being brought in as guilty of wilfully throwing away opportunities of discipline if unprepared for eternity, that the ear shall tell how it received the modulations of the air, and gave him notice of varieties of sound; and the eye testify how it gathered the rich showers of the sunlight, and enabled him to take the sweep of the panorama of creation. And thus when he stands in his resurrection body before his Judge, the organs of that body, however altered by the process which has made them imperishable, and however abused whilst he lived neglectful, shall witness so strongly to the fact: "of warning having been given as to our present state being a state of moral discipline, that with the approval of all orders of intelligence, he will be condemned as having neglected to seek 'meekness for the inheritance of the saints in light.'"

II. We turn now to the second division of our subject. Up to this point we have been engaged with the showing the fairness, or rather the necessity, of the supposition, that in this life we are in a state of moral discipline for the next. We are now to assume, that such is the character and design of our present con-

dition, and briefly to examine into the justness of St. Paul's statement with respect to himself and the Colossians, that God had "made them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

We generally speak of preparation for heaven as a gradual thing; and without question, there is a sense in which, in the proportion that they grow holier, and more full of God's love, true believers become more fit for the enjoyment of the kingdom. But since St. Paul speaks of the meekness as already acquired—"who hath made us meet"—we cannot well understand our text as referring to that gradual preparation which is effected by the sanctifying influences of the Spirit. We are confirmed in this idea by observing, that it is not to the Third, but to the First Person in the Trinity, that the apostle here ascribes the preparation: "Giving thanks to the Father who hath made us meet." Undoubtedly the same thing is often in Scripture referred promiscuously to the Three Persons in the Trinity. Thus, though it is especially the office of the Spirit to sanctify, we find St. Jude addressing his epistle to those that are "sanctified by God the Father." And, indeed, whilst holding the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, we think it nothing more than a natural consequence on the unity of these persons, that, in some places, the Bible shall speak of a thing as done by one of these persons, and yet in another place ascribe that same thing to another. We do not, then, conclude on the mention of "the Father" in our text, that the apostle had no allusion to the grand preparation which is the work of the Spirit. But when we combine this mention of the Father, and no: of the Spirit, with the use of the past tense,—with the assertion, in other words, that the work is already done, and not still in progress,—we seem warranted by the two circumstances, if not by either one singly, in considering the meekness here spoken of by St. Paul, as not that which is the result of continued sanctification. And the truth of this matter will appear to be, that as soon as man is effectually called of God, he is made meet for the inheritance; but that, by remaining on earth after conversion, and advancing in the graces which belong to Christianity, he becomes—we do not say more meet for the inheritance, but fitted for a higher station, and a more distinguished blessedness among the children of the first

resurrection. If the man die so soon as justified, he would possess the inheritance; and, therefore, it must follow, that in being justified a man is also made meet. But this statement in no degree militates against the worth or necessity of sanctification; inasmuch as if there be, as we believe, varieties in future happiness, the several portions of the heirs of the kingdom shall be adapted to the scale of their present attainments. We suppose, then, that the meetness for the inheritance is acquired at the same time with the title to that inheritance. The apostle, in fact, makes the two things contemporaneous; for while he speaks of "the Father who hath made us meet," he adds, "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." Now, unquestionably, the "deliverance from the power of darkness," and "the translation into the kingdom of Christ," are immediate results, or rather constituent parts, of that change which we define as "conversion," or "renewal;" and whereas St. Paul places the meetness for the inheritance, even before the deliverance and the translation, we shall clearly not be warranted in considering that meetness as acquired long after, but must at least regard the fitness for heaven as wrought out at the same time with the renovation of nature. In simple truth, it is by having our nature renewed as it is at conversion, that we are "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The change effected is precisely similar to that which would be effected on the body, if the organs and senses which are adapted to this earth, were so remodelled and modified as to become adapted to another section of the universe. The unconverted soul can understand, and feel, and taste, and enjoy the things only of this world; the converted soul can see, and feel, and taste, and enjoy the things of another world. Sin was a delight to him, but now it is loathed; God was forsaken, but now He is sought; holiness was disliked, but now it is desired; there was "no form nor comeliness" in Jesus, but now He is "the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." Thus the result is the same as if you supposed a complete change in the whole apparatus of powers, and senses, and affections; and the com-

municated organs are manifestly those which will be required in order to enjoyment, if not to existence, in the inheritance of light. They are the organs which enable men to discern the beauty of that heaven wherein dwelleth righteousness, and to hold communion with beings who delight in performing God's will. They qualify their possessors to find pleasure in those exercises of praise which constitute so much of the future employment of the saints, and to feel love towards all who bear the same image, or who possess the same kingdom. We do not indeed say, that at the instant of conversion these organs will come into full play and exercise; we only say that these organs are then imparted, or that the old organs are then so renewed as to become adapted to the scenes and occupations of heaven. And this is all that is required in order to the making good the assertion, that "the Father has made us meet." The infant, as soon as born, is meet for residence on earth, seeing that it brings with it an equipment of senses and powers, which, though weak and undeveloped, are those that are needed by the dwellers in this terrestrial creation. And in like manner, the justified man, so soon as justified, is meet for the inheritance in heaven, seeing that the renewal of nature of which he has been the subject, implies or includes the communication of spiritual affections and faculties, which require, however, to be drawn out and strengthened, and are precisely those which were always to be found at home in the scenery, and amongst the inhabitants of the invisible world.

We still keep fast to the illustration, of which we have availed ourselves through the whole of our discourse. If one of us were about to be translated to a distant planet, where the light, and the air, and the rain, and the gravitation, and the tenantry, were all broadly different from what they are in our own, the senses and the powers of such an individual must undergo a great change ere he could be fitted for the new and far-off dwelling-place. And if there be given him, through some supernatural operation, in exchange for his present apparatus of organs, just that state of powers which would enable him to appreciate the grandeur and loveliness of the distant domain, and to enter rejoicingly into the pursuits and pleasures of its unknown relations, we should not hesitate to say of the in-

dividual, that he was made meet for the planet, and that he was ready for the translation. And it is precisely the same with reference to the fitness for heaven. We look on the unconverted man, engrossed and delighted with what is earthly and perishable, and we feel that the transferring this man to heaven without a renewal of nature, would be transferring him to a new world with organs and senses adapted only to the old. If he could exist, he would find no enjoyment in heaven, any more than the man whose eye-sight, and hearing, and touch, and scent, and taste, had nothing correspondent to them in the creation which he was sent to inhabit. But let the man be converted, and old things are passed away; he has new hopes, new fears, new desires, new feelings. He sees a beauty in holiness, and therefore he has the eye-sight of heaven; he hears a melody in the Gospel, and therefore he has the hearing of heaven; his hand handles the Word of life, and therefore he has the touch of heaven; there is fragrance to him in the sacrifice of Christ, and therefore he has the scent of heaven; he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and therefore he has the taste of heaven. Thus all his senses—if it be lawful to define the spiritual by the corporeal—all his senses are adapted to the inheritance of the saints. And if now translated to that inheritance, he is not a man removed from one world to another, with a set of powers belonging to the old, but not fitted for the new; he is indeed a man whose dwelling-place is shifted, so that all around him differs from his original home, but he carries with him organs which are demanded by the residence, and therefore will feel himself in his element as soon as ushered into the inheritance. And since it is the very meaning of conversion, that a man is so born again, that the powers with which the soul is equipped, pass from adaptation to this life to adaptation to the next life—from all that fitness to the earthly, which lies in the holiest attachments, for a fitness to the heavenly—and since, we say, there is necessary to conversion all these changes in our spiritual organs, may we not contend, that, as soon as a man is called and justified by the Father, he is prepared for the invisible world, just as the man who has fresh apparatus and senses for another and a wholly different planet; and might not, then, St. Paul, speaking of himself

and other renewed men, say with perfect accuracy, "Giving thanks to the Father, which hath made us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?"

And now there remains nothing, but that we associate the two parts of our discourse; and that, having shown you, in the first place, that you are to regard the present as a state of discipline for the future, and, in the second, that the required fitness for the change is found in the renewal of our nature by conversion, we exhort you to improve the day of probation, by seeking to be made new creatures in Christ. We began with assuming the thorough reasonableness of the expectation, that we are placed on earth in order to gain fitness for a higher stage of being; and we have now shown you, that this fitness is imparted to all who submit themselves to the conditions of the Gospel. The inference from these showings is clear and unavoidable, that, perceiving ourselves in a state of moral discipline, we close thankfully with those offers of mercy; and ensure, what we cannot elsewhere find, such improvement of the estate, that we shall be schooled for immortality. The Christian's life will, indeed, as we have already observed, be throughout a course of preparation for heaven; but he is made meet at the outset, though in all after stages the moral discipline may be so powerfully applied, that he shall work out "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." It is, then, only requisite that the man be converted; and, whilst immediately prepared if the change were immediate, he will pass his days in that training which is the design of his present condition; and thus living as an immortal creature, fulfil that great end of his being which he is able to ascertain as a rational.

Let those, therefore, who would give great weight to the suggestions of reason, hearken to those suggestions as they admonish them to submit to Revelation. Reason confesses our state to be one of moral discipline; but she cannot master the problem—how may we so pass through it, as to be fitted for a state of happiness and joy. Baffled by the disorders and intricacies of the existing dispensation, she can discover no mode by which the corrupt can be schooled into purity, and the depraved prepared for the enjoyment of righteousness. And when, therefore, Revelation comes forward, sus-

tained by the evidence which reason approves, and presenting the intelligence which reason solicits, let it not be thought that you act as disciples of reason unless you thankfully submit yourselves to the discipline enjoined by Revelation. Believing in Christ so that you receive Him into the heart by faith, thus, and thus alone, can fallen creatures hope for meetness to partake the inheritance of the saints in light.

May we all seek this meetness; knowing, that if not sought, and if not found, we must be landed in eternity meet only for the inheritance of the reprobate in darkness. As born of the flesh, we are meet for the heritage of cloud and tribulation; but it is only as born of the Spirit, that we can be meet for the heritage of sunshine and gladness. Beautiful are the words (would that their beauty might be recognized and felt by all!)—"partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." "*Partakers.*" Nothing of solitude, nothing of loneliness. It shall heighten our bliss that we share it with a multitude; that we walk not the magnificent outspread, a scattered few, an inconsiderable remnant of the mighty tribes; but that, surrounded by a company which no man can number, in our every joy myriads have companionship, and our every note of praise is echoed back by ten thousand times ten thousand voices. "*Partakers of the inheritance.*" "If children," says the apostle, "then heirs; heirs of the Father; yea, joint-heirs with Christ." Admitted into the fellowship of God by adoption, we become possessed of all the privileges of sons; and now, though undoubtedly undeserving, having no merit in ourselves which we can present for a title, we have so inalienable a right as members of Christ to the glories of immortality, that we have only to wait till death awaken us to joy, and we shall enter, like the undoubted heir who has completed his minority, on the vast and splendid possession. "The inheritance of the saints in light." "Light." The shadows of the temporal dispensation shall have passed away, and the whole plan of the Creator's dealings be spread before the admiring saints, one blaze of beauty.

"Light." The discrepancies in Providence, the seeming contradictions in God's government, the obscurities which are caused by our "knowing only in part"—all these shall have been removed, and, while appearing on the tresses of eternity, have left no dark spot in the map of time. "Light." It shall not be the brilliancy of the material sun which makes the future landscape indescribably radiant: the future hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. "Light." The saints themselves, purged from all that is corruptible—the purified soul in an imperishable body, shall be wondrously luminous. Even now, as St. Paul expresses it, they "shine as lights in the world;" but hereafter perfectly conformed to the image of Christ—of whom we are told, that at His transfiguration (which exhibited what humanity shall be when glorified) "His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light"—they shall be conspicuous amongst all orders of intelligence, transformed into glowing and beaming likenesses of Him whose radiations occupy the universe. "Light," says the psalmist, "is sown for the righteous;" and the seeds of the sparkling harvest are deposited in their souls while working out salvation. Holiness is the moral light, and the germ of heavenly purity is the element of heavenly splendour. Let it now, then, be our endeavour to "walk as children of the light, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reproving them." There must be (and we press this again and again on your notice,) there must be a correspondence between the scene and the creature. The inheritance is one of light, and therefore the heir also, in the words of St. Paul, must be "light in the Lord." We will aim, then, God willing, so to improve this state of discipline, that, casting off the ignorance and corruption in which we are naturally enveloped, we may at length be called to dwell with those righteous, of whom Christ said, they shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father."

THE PROPOSED INCREASE OF THE GRANT TO MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.

THE following letter, extracted from a Correspondence between the Rev. HUGH M'NEILL and one of the Members for Liverpool, states in plain and simple form the objection to the proposal about to be submitted to Parliament, for making an increased and permanent national Grant to the Popish College of Maynooth, near Dublin.

Liverpool, March 18, 1845

My Lord,—I beg to assure you that nothing could have been further from my intention, than to impose upon your Lordship the unreasonable trouble of entering into any details or anticipating any of the arguments which may be adduced in a Parliamentary discussion.

My simple and single object in taking the liberty of addressing your Lordship, was to be favoured with a reference to the letter of the engagements, into which Parliament was said to have entered for the support of the College of Maynooth.

Your Lordship said, in the House of Commons (at least, it was so reported in the public papers), that you "thought it the duty of Parliament to carry out the engagements which had been entered into with the College of Maynooth, both in the spirit and letter."

I was therefore led to conclude that your Lordship's opinion rested, not on any doubtful bearing or variously assumed value of certain facts and arguments, but upon some actual engagement or engagements embodied in some public documents.

From the reply with which your Lordship has favoured me, I now perceive that you have no knowledge of any such document (from which I confidently infer that no such thing exists), but that your opinion rests on facts generally known, and arguments which you think it would be premature to discuss at large until the whole subject comes before Parliament.

I will not, of course, intrude any further discussion of the subject upon your Lordship, I expect you to take the trouble of noticing this letter. But however satisfactory your Lordship's reservation of your arguments for the floor of the House of Commons may be to those who are in a position to hear and answer them there, it is obviously not the most satisfactory arrangement for your Lordship's constituents.

I trust, therefore that you will kindly excuse me, when I take advantage of the connexion of this correspondence with your Lordship's reputation and extended influence to state briefly some of my own convictions (in which I doubt not many millions of Her Majesty's subjects will concur) upon this subject.

I believe that as he has blessed Almighty God to bless us with a revelation of His will, that revelation is not to be disregarded without guilt in the act and danger in the consequences, "whether it be done by a nation or by an individual man only."

I believe, that a national adoption and encouragement of the doctrines and practices of the Roman Church is, on the part of England, a practical disregard of the authority of Almighty God, who has plainly condemned many of those doctrines, and forbidden many of those practices.

I believe, that to increase the amount of the grant of public money for the support of the College of Maynooth, and to pledge the State to the repairs of the buildings composing and connected with that college, amounts to a national adoption and a very efficient encouragement of the doctrines and practices of the Roman Church.

My conviction, therefore, is, that even if it could be shown that a constructive engagement (and the plea of a *direct* one must now be relinquished,) existed to maintain that college, the result would be to place us in this dilemma—that, either from deference to the acts and words of our fathers, we must continue to violate the plain precepts of the Almighty; or, out of deference to the authority of the God of our fathers and our own God, we must refuse to make ourselves voluntary partakers of our fathers' sins.

I am quite aware that this is a tone ungenial to Parliament, and that the ready retort is at hand about the assumed interpretation of the revealed will of God. But, my Lord, if we once admit the sacred Scriptures to be so obscure, that it still remains doubtful whether bowing down to images is a *sin*, and teaching men so, be, or be not offensive to the Almighty, and such an offence as in days past, incurred crushing calamities subversive of the most flourishing national prosperity, we do in fact, yield all that is worth contending for, altho' Rome has ever contended for, viz, the practical usefulness of the written Word of God. It is vain—It is, I think, an offence to good sense and honest consistency to profess to take the Scriptures as our guide in some things while we so willfully and avowedly disregard them in others. It is more it is an insult to the Almighty himself to pretend to be guided by His Word, so far as it involves no practical inconvenience among our fellow men, and, as soon as such inconvenience arises to find excuses for not being guided by His Word any longer.

If England in her Parliament and in her constitutions be content to treat the Word of God so, we must only patiently await His provoked and sure, though mercifully protracted judgments, but all that is required to change the face of affairs, and enable us without hypocrisy, to seek shelter under the shadow of the Most High is practical consistency in the members of England's Church.

To say that such views and arguments are not suited to these times is manifestly not to answer them. They profess to rest upon the Word of Him, who is "the same yesterday and to day and for ever," and, unless they can be refuted from the same sacred source, they must stand. To attempt to refute them from any lower source, is to concede their scriptural character and to betray the unchristian weakness of the cause opposed to them. To attempt to turn them into ridicule is to betray worse than weakness.

As a clergyman of the Church of England I cannot with a safe conscience take any other than this Protestant tone, and I do most cordially rejoice in your Lordship's assurance of your "undiminished attachment to our Protestant faith and our Protestant institutions, and your unshaken desire to uphold them."

I have the honour to be, My Lord,
Your Lordship's faithful and obedient servant,
HUGH M'NEILL
Lord Viscount Sandon, M P

A SERMON, BY THE HON. AND REV. BAPTIST W. NOEL, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW, ON THE MORNING OF
EASTER TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 1846.

His Annual Sermon to Children.

"Take My yoke upon you."—Matthew xi. 29.

It was thus that the Lord Jesus Christ addressed the people that were round about Him; telling them to "take His yoke upon them." A yoke was a frame of wood, which was put upon the neck of beasts of burden, to draw their loads with; and therefore to "take the yoke" of any one, is in other words to enter into his service; for the animal that bore the yoke, was in the service of the person, who placed the yoke upon him. Jesus, then, said to the people round Him, "Take My yoke"—'enter into My service, begin to serve Me.'

But why should the Lord Jesus Christ call His religion a "yoke"? Why is the beginning to serve Jesus Christ like "taking a yoke upon us"?

It is so, in the first place, because it means that we should give ourselves up to serve Him; that we should no longer look upon ourselves as our own, or free to do as we please, but should consider that we are bound to employ our faculties and our time, and all that we have, according to His will. Therefore He called His religion a "yoke."

But it is especially called so, because it requires from us much self-denial; much restraint upon our inclinations. It would not be a yoke in this sense, if we were perfect; it will not be a yoke in this sense, when we reach heaven, because then we shall have no wishes opposite to the will of Christ; but while we are in this world, to serve Christ must require us to restrain our inclinations, and to controul ourselves. And therefore Christ says, "Take My yoke upon you."

The reason why His service must be a "yoke" to us while we are in this world, is because our nature is so far fallen from what it was when God made our first parents so perfect and so good. We have now to say, like David, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;" so that we have been sinful from our very birth, and are sinful by our nature itself. As St. Paul says, we are "by nature"—not only by habit, not only by imitation, but "by nature, the children of wrath;" that is, exposed to God's wrath because our nature is so bad and so corrupted. And this evil

nature begins to work from the very first in a little child, and evil passions begin to manifest themselves very early; so that we perceive in children that what Solomon said is true—"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child;" tied to its heart—fastened to it, so that you cannot loose the one from the other. Folly is natural to it; folly sticks close to it. If children are left to themselves, almost all of them begin to quarrel with each other. If they were not restrained by their parents, or by those in whose care they are, they would manifest very soon envy towards one another, and jealousy, and would soon begin to indulge bad passions; they would show greediness; they would practice deceit; left to themselves, there are scarcely any children, that would not very speedily form a habit of lying. All these are very foolish ways; and therefore Solomon says, "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child." They offend God, and lead to misery. Yet children are disposed to practise them; you are, my dear children; you are, my young friends. And if these things have been checked, it is because you have been placed under the care of those, who have endeavoured to train you up wisely and to better things. But, still more, scarcely any children manifest a disposition to fear or to please God. They know they ought to serve Him; but they do not wish to serve Him. They do not take delight in the Scripture, though they know it to be the word and the will of God. They do not love secret prayer, and are little disposed to converse about eternity, or about the welfare of their souls. They indulge in great trifling, and even if they are asked to care about their souls, manifest very little concern for them, thinking far more of eating and drinking and playing, than they do about having the favour of God, or escaping hell, or reaching heaven. All this is because "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child;" and this "foolishness" it is, that makes the service of Christ a "yoke." For, a child, to become one of Christ's disciples, must restrain these natural inclinations. St. James says, that we must "submit ourselves to God;" we are not disposed to

do so in our corrupt state, but we *must* yield our will up to Him, and submit ourselves to His guidance and His government; and this is to put on His yoke. St. Paul says, that we must "yield ourselves unto God;" that is, not only submit to what He does, but likewise willingly serve Him with all our powers, and mean to live in this world to glorify and honour Him. This is not according to our natural inclination in our fallen state; and therefore we must put a restraint upon ourselves; and thus religion is a yoke.

But then, my young friends, it is a yoke that *must* be borne. We have no choice in this matter; at least none unless we wish to ruin ourselves. When Christ says, "Take My yoke upon you," He tells us that which *must* be done if we would be saved. And we ought to consent to this self-restraint, on account of the number of powerful reasons, that should make us wish for it.

Some of these are very plain; and you have often doubtless heard of them, and sometimes thought about them. It is wise to "take Christ's yoke;" that is, to begin to serve Him, to give ourselves heartily up to His service, to submit ourselves entirely to His will, just as the animal that bore the yoke began to employ its strength for its owner, and submitted to his guidance and direction—it is wise for us to wear Christ's yoke, if it were only to change hell for heaven. We shall not be very long here; and after this short state, comes hell or heaven. If we do not take Christ's yoke, we shall find ourselves in hell; and if we do take Christ's yoke, we shall then be admitted to heaven; and that is reason enough why we should take it, and why we should begin to serve Christ—why you should begin to serve Him, while you are young.

It is quite reason enough, my young friends, that you should choose Christ's service, if it were only to enjoy the favour of the Almighty and infinite God, instead of being exposed to His curse. If we do not take Christ's yoke, we shall be cursed of God; if we do take His yoke, we shall have the favour of God and His friendship for ever; and this is quite reason enough why we should take it—why we should listen to Jesus Christ when He says to us, "Take My yoke upon you," and enter upon His service, and submit to His will, and give ourselves up to glorify Him and please Him as long as we live.

It is quite reason enough to choose His service, that we may escape from a guilty conscience, and have, instead, the feeling and consciousness of doing right. There is something so cheerful in knowing that we have chosen well, that we have taken

the right course, and are doing what God approves, that if it were only this, it would be reason enough why we should not delay, but take Christ's yoke upon us at once.

It is quite reason enough to take His yoke, and to choose to serve Him instead of serving Satan, that we may have in this world not mere acquaintances, but friends. Ungodly persons can seldom look to have any other than acquaintances in the world, because ungodly principles do not make people love each other much. But those that serve Christ, love each other. You may have wise and steady and lasting friendships, if you "take His yoke upon you;" but if you do not, you must expect to be solitary in this world—to have your heart little satisfied with the friendships that you may form.

And it is quite reason enough why we should "take Christ's yoke," and feel that His command to us is a most merciful command, if it were only that we may exchange terror for hope; and instead of always looking forward to the future with alarm, not knowing what may happen to us, be able to feel that life will be a continual improvement, and death a great gain. These things, and many similar reasons, might prompt every child in this congregation, and every young person whom I now address, to "take Christ's yoke" upon him, and upon her.

But I wish to-day only to dwell on one reason: you so much need, my dear young friends, to have some almighty friend. We are very guilty, and we are very weak; we are ignorant, and we are exposed to a thousand dangers; and therefore we need a mighty, and a merciful and a faithful friend, to guide us and to take care of us.

Your parents may love you, and brothers and sisters may love one another; but parents and brothers and sisters are very weak, and they cannot serve one another as they would. They must be taken from you by death. They may often be unable to help you. When you are sick, they cannot stop disease; when you are sad, they often will not be able to give you comfort; when you are about to die, they cannot go with you to death. You therefore need a good, wise, powerful, and faithful friend. Now if you "take the yoke of Christ upon you," Christ will be such a friend. Instead of being lonely, and outcast, and unbefriended in this world, you may have the constant blessed assurance, that He will never leave you nor forsake you, till He conducts you to perfect excellence and perfect bliss. And this is the chief reason why I would say to you in His words to-day, "take His yoke upon you."

We could know very little of the dispositions of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, unless He had been pleased to tell us of them. He does not speak to us now; we do not see Him now, because He is pleased in this world to exercise our faith, and make us live by faith; but then He *has* spoken to us in His Word, and He has there told us what He feels respecting those that do "take His yoke upon them;" and I will now beg you to think of some of those things, that are said in this Book respecting it. First look at the second chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews: "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." That verse, you will see, tells you these things. That He is "a High Priest" to us, if we have taken His yoke. You know, Aaron was called "high priest," because he was appointed by God to offer sacrifice for the people, when otherwise they would have been killed for their sins; he offered an animal in their place, and when the animal died instead of them, they were preserved; and then he had, once at least in the year, to take the blood of the animal that was sacrificed, and go into the most holy place with the blood, and to present it to God, that the people might be pardoned through that sacrifice. When it is said that Jesus is to us "a High Priest," it means that He has done these two things for us: He has first shed His own blood as a sacrifice, that we might not die for ever; and then He has gone into heaven with His own sacrifice, that He might plead it before God, as Aaron used to plead the sacrifice of the animal; for Jesus, on behalf of those who trust Him and have become His disciples, pleads His sacrifice, that they may not perish. This verse tells us, further, that He is a "merciful" High Priest: one who, when He knows all our sins, can pardon them; one who, when He is aware of all our sorrows, can pity them. It tells us, that He is a "faithful" High Priest to His disciples; that is, He can never fail to plead for them, and secure their welfare; if He loves them once, He loves them for ever, and will take care to do all He can to make them happy for ever. And it tells us, that we may know Him to be "a merciful and faithful High Priest" to His people, because He was "made like them in all things," and bare all their infirmities when He was here; knowing all their weaknesses, because, as far as He was sinless, He *had* their weaknesses. You may be sure, therefore, that He can feel for *your* weaknesses, because He was

once infirm in this world as you are. And thus, if you "take the yoke" of Christ, and Christ becomes your friend, you may know certainly that He is "a merciful and faithful High Priest," to secure your reconciliation to God.

Look, again, at the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, which will tell you something more of this faithful and merciful Saviour. "We have not an High Priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." This gracious Saviour, we are told here, can feel our infirmities—can sympathise with us in our various trials, and that, because He was "tempted," that is, tried, "in all points, like as we are." Whatever temptations you may have to do wrong, whatever trials of your feelings you may have, and whatever troubles to go through, the Lord Jesus Christ has passed through much heavier troubles, much greater trials, than ever you can be called to; and when you think of this, you may feel sure that He can sympathise with you. You know, my young friends, that your parents can sympathise with you; you trust to them more than to any other person on earth probably, that they can feel for you; if you are sick, or if you are sorrowful, you know that they can feel with you, though nobody else could. Now the Lord Jesus Christ, who has passed through such great troubles Himself, and passed through them on purpose that He might be a merciful and faithful Saviour, can feel with you, and feel for you, far more than your own parents do; and if you "take His yoke upon you," then will He thus sympathise with you all through your trials in life. Hence the apostle adds in the next verse, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace"—poor guilty sinners that deserve nothing but anger, we may yet come to God without the smallest fear, assured through Christ that we may be heard—"that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Because the Lord Jesus Christ is such a sympathising High Priest, and at the same time has so much power to save, you may at all times address God in prayer if you once become His disciples, and feel sure that in every hour of need you may have His merciful aid.

But, my dear young friends, we are not only sorrowful beings often, and it is not only true that we must have many trials in this world; alas! we make those trials worse by our own faults. Alas! our sins are our greatest enemies, our greatest tormentors. And since we are so prone to sin, and even the disciples of Christ are so continually ready

to do wrong, to say wrong, to think wrong, we might suppose that Jesus Christ, after He had done so much to turn us away from sin, might not have mercy on us, when still, after all, we sin. But His Word tells us, that if we do sin, and yet are penitent when we have sinned, He does not turn away from those that have taken His yoke; He does not disregard the wants and the weaknesses of His own disciples. For thus you read in the second chapter of the first epistle of John. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not;" that is what every disciple of Christ should take most care of—that he does not sin at all; "and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." If you "take His yoke," then, notwithstanding your faults, when you seem so utterly unworthy of God's mercy, when your heart might sink with the load of guilt, when you feel in yourselves that you have so often sinned, that you might weary the patience of your friends, or weary the patience of God, you may yet be assured that this cannot be respecting God, because you have "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" because God can justly forgive you after all your sins for the sake of Christ, and Christ is your Advocate, that is, will plead on your behalf, that your sins may be forgiven. And when we think how many our faults are, and how much we offend against God by them, we never can be thankful enough for this assurance, that Jesus Christ has towards His people a mercy so great, that when they sin, He, as soon as He sees them penitent, is their "Advocate with the Father," and secures their pardon and their blessing.

And thus it is, that the Lord Jesus Christ promises, in the verse that immediately goes before our text, that if we come to Him, He will give us rest—rest from sin and rest from sorrow. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." He is ready thus to comfort us in all the passages of life, even to the infirmities of age; and then in the approach of death, He is able, and He is willing, to "give us rest" if we "come to Him;" that is, if we apply to Him for mercy, if we come and place ourselves under His care, if we come and give ourselves up to His service. "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."

He has further shown His great kindness to sinners, in assuring us, as you read in the sixth chapter of John, that if we do but listen to His words, and do but "come to Him," He never will reject us: "Him that cometh to Me, I will in

no wise cast out." He has such surpassing mercy, that though our faults may be very great, our guilt very burdensome, and we may be in danger of eternal ruin by our sins, yet if we do but appeal to Him for mercy, He will not cast us out. And this is *always* His feeling towards those who come to Him. The Lord Jesus Christ cannot change, and never dies; and as the apostle says, "He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." He always lives to ask God to bless them; to plead His own merit, that they may be blessed for His sake, that they may be happy through Him; to secure their welfare by His prayer.

And if, my dear young friends, you needed any further encouragement to "take Christ's yoke upon you," and to make Him your friend, you would have it in the proof He has given us in His Word, of the peculiar kindness and tenderness which He showed to children when He was upon earth. Think of that account in the tenth chapter of St. Mark, which you have often read, in connection with these verses that I have now been reading to you, as a proof of the feelings of Jesus Christ towards you now, if you have any disposition to "come to Him." When His disciples thought that He should not be troubled with such little children, and reproved the persons that brought them to Him, the Lord Jesus Christ was much displeased with their keeping children away from Him, and said—"Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not;" and instead of driving those little children from His presence, "He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them." Now He is the same Saviour this day, that He was then; and if He blessed those little children, and if He sees you now desiring to come to Him that you may be blessed, do you think that Christ will drive you from His presence? "He took them up in His arms and blessed them;" and so, my dear children, if you do but believe what His Word says of Him, and see how needful it is to have Christ for your friend, and long to "take His yoke upon you," and give yourselves up to His service, you may depend upon it that He is ready to bless and to save you.

And therefore, listen to His Word. "Take His yoke." It is not I that say to you this day, but it is Christ himself who says to every child, and every young person here—"Take My yoke upon thee;" "enter into My service, and strive to follow and to serve Me." Listen to His words, I beseech you, if you would

be happy and if you would be blessed.

How else, my dear young friends, can you expect to pass through life with tranquillity? What, I ask you, would Joseph have done, when he was put into a dismal dungeon in a foreign land, if he had not had a God to go to? But Joseph would not have been able to go to God in prayer, unless he had begun early to fear and serve Him. We do not know how soon Joseph was converted to God, but he must have been brought young, or else he never could, while he was still a youth, have found God so near to him when he was in that prison. And how do you think David would have borne his troubles, when he was driven from his home and from his country by the malice of Saul, unless he had been always able to trust in God as his God? But unless he had been religious early, unless he had given himself up to God's service young, he never would have found this consolation in trusting Him when he was soon driven from his home. Or how do you think Daniel would have found any peace, when Nebuchadnezzar had threatened the destruction of all the wise men in Babylon, and Daniel and his companions were to be put to death, unless he could have prayed to God for help? But because he had served God from his childhood, he *could* pray to Him for help, and he found God therefore to be his friend. Now what these youths did, that ought you to do likewise. While you are children, commit yourselves to the care of God through Christ; give yourselves up to the service of Christ now, in order that you may find Him your friend in all those troubles that may come afterwards. Joseph, when he was loved by his father, and in his happy home, never thought he should have such troubles afterwards; David, when he was keeping the sheep, and his father tenderly loved him, doubtless, for his many amiable qualities, never could think that in a few years he should be driven as a poor exile from his country; and Daniel had no reason to expect, when he was pursuing his studies as a diligent and temperate youth, that a few years afterwards he should be sentenced to be killed for no fault of his. And so, my dear young friends, it is impossible for you to say what God may reserve for you in future years; but be sure of this—that all life is not very bright. It is very rare to see a sky, in which there are no clouds; rarer still, to go through a whole day, in which no cloud crosses the sun; most rare of all, to pass through life, without having some bitter troubles to meet. If you would have comfort when those troubles come, and not be foolish enough to think that your

hearts will be always as light as they are this day, then seek to have God for your friend; and if you would have Him to be your friend when those troubles come, then seek Him for your friend *now*. Nay, even now are not your hearts sometimes sorrowful? Do not your faults sometimes make you grave? How blessed, then, now to feel that Jesus Christ is your friend, and will watch over you living and dying, and carry you safe into eternity!

If you do not listen to His voice, and will not "take His yoke," then you will be like a little boat, that is just putting off from the shore, and is about to enter upon a very stormy sea, while it has no strength in itself, and is without any pilot on board. You will be like a poor foolish child, placed in the midst of a trackless desert, without a guide to conduct it to any place of safety. You will be like a helpless hare, placed in the midst of a whole herd of wolves. You will be exposed to dangers, against which you cannot guard; to trials, which you can ill sustain; and you have no certain guidance or defence to trust to.

Oh! that God himself may teach you, were it only for your own happiness, my young friends, that you must take Christ's yoke, and become his servant. "His service is perfect freedom;" for that self-denial which it at first commands, becomes less and less, and the will is more and more submitted to His will. It is a more cheerful life even from the first, than a life of disobedience; and it is conducting to that brighter world, where every wish will be harmonious with the will of Christ, and where you will rejoice to all eternity, if you have "taken His yoke upon you."

But what must you do to obtain this blessing? I do hope that some here wish to take Christ's yoke, and would be heartily the servants of Christ; then remember those words of His, which I dare say you have often thought of, and can scarcely think too much about—"Verily verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This change of our rebellion into submission, of thoughtlessness into earnestness, of changeableness into a fixed resolution, must come from grace. God the Spirit must change the heart of every child, and every young person in this assembly, who becomes a disciple of Christ. It is His work to do it. And therefore let me beg you at once to seek it from Him. If He blessed you, even while I speak to you now, might you enter on that resolution to serve Christ, that with His help you might never break. Even now, while I speak to you, you might feel, if taught by Him, that to serve Christ

is so wise, so safe, so blessed, that you determine to serve Him; and the determination might last to eternity. God might give you at once, were He to bless your prayers, that principle that no power of earth or hell should ever move; and a feeble child might be more than a match for Satan and the world. And still, once giving your will to Christ, once determining to serve Him, the same grace that prompted that early resolution, might maintain and confirm it, till you enter heaven in a triumph, never again to be interrupted or ended.

But if you are not so blessed, and if any of you go from this house of prayer still unchanged, I do beg you never to cease from prayer till you are heard. Never give up the habit of prayer till God blesses it. Ask Him again and again to convert your heart, and make you "take Christ's yoke," till you do take it; till all your friends can see plainly, that you have submitted your will to Christ's; till they can see in your tempers and conduct every day the marks that God has made you His child. My dear young friends, never cease from prayer till those blessed results follow; for Christ has said, that He "will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Trust His truth, and you will prove Him to be true. He "will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask;" ask, then, for this great gift, until He grants it you, and you are saved. But nevertheless, use all the means in your power; seek by every method you can,

to "take Christ's yoke upon you." Listen to every religious conversation, into which any friend will enter with you. Whenever you have the opportunity of reading the Scriptures, read them thankfully; read them with joy; read them with thoughtfulness. Whenever the hour of prayer arrives, bless God for it; and pray from your heart. Whatever fault you can find in yourselves, endeavour to subdue it. Heed all the good instructions that you receive from any one. Endeavour daily, with a good conscience, to fulfil your various childish duties. Strive to improve yourselves in every manner; for it is in the way of duty, and not out of the path of duty, that God the Spirit usually converts the soul. It is not often, that those who "turn away their ear from hearing the law," are blessed; but it is when a child, or a young person, or any one else, is so far influenced by the truth as to begin to use the means, that then God the Spirit blesses such a soul, and turns it to Christ. Therefore I beg you, my dear children, if you wish to be Christ's followers, if this day you desire to "take His yoke," that you may have Him for your Friend, that you may reach heaven, that you may be blessed for eternity, that in His likeness you may be introduced to Him above, now at once be diligent in using all those methods, by which you may be brought into religious habits, to religious feelings, and especially to earnest prayer.

THE PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. TIMOTHY GIBSON, M.A.

Curate and Aftor

St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green; Evening Lecturer of St. George's, Church at the East. Sunday Morning Lecturer at St. Swin's.

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He is not here, for He is risen.—Matthew xxviii. 6.

WHEN Jesus expired upon the cross of Calvary, and was laid in the tomb of Joseph, it was a season of rejoicing to His foes, and of mourning to His disciples. The mysterious obscurity in which He had appeared during His earthly sojourn, had previously been diversified by some bright rays of heavenly glory, which now and then darted through the veil, like the light through an opening cloud; but now the Sun of righteousness appeared to set in the shades of darkness and night. The enemies of the

Son of God began to exult, as though they had attained their wishes, and entombed for ever in the same grave, the body of Jesus and the purposes of His grace; while His disciples were in danger of giving themselves up to despair, as having been led to anticipate events, which they now thought could not be realised: "We trusted," said they, "that it had been He, which should have redeemed Israel."

Things soon, however, assumed a different aspect; the morning of the third

day had scarcely dawned upon the earth, when Jesus resumed His Almighty power; and, arrayed with immortal glory, rose to die no more. "The bands of death," by which "it was not possible that life should be holden," were burst asunder; "the king of terrors" was compelled to resign his prey, and to own his captive his conqueror. The dominion of Satan received a shock, from which it will never recover—the presage of its final destruction; and Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

The circumstances attending this event are recorded in the context, with all that simplicity and majesty which characterize the inspired historians, and which give to their writings the stamp of heavenly truth.

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered, and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail! And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go, tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me"—(Mat. xxviii. 1—10).

The fact, thus announced, is one of no common interest, of no trifling moment: its importance in the scheme of Christianity, stands unrivalled. Its connection with the Gospel of our salvation is so close and inseparable, that they stand or fall together; invalidate the one, and you destroy the other; establish the one, and you maintain the other. Such is the argument of the great apostle to the Gentiles: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified

of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept"—(1 Cor. xv. 14—20).

In order that we may more fully know the certainty of those things, wherein we have been instructed, for our personal satisfaction and comfort, and that we may be prepared to meet the cavils of ungodliness, let us, in dependence upon Divine grace, proceed to this momentous subject, and examine with care the various proofs which exist, of our Lord's resurrection.

"And may the power which melts the rock,
Be felt by all assembled here!
Or else our service will but mock
The God whom we profess to fear."

Let us consider—

I. That class of evidence, which may be called circumstantial or presumptive.

1. The first circumstance to be mentioned, is the *precaution* of the Jews. We find, that Jesus was scarcely laid in the tomb, before they manifested an intense anxiety to have it secured, that His professions of rising again might be falsified, and that the possibility of his being taken away, might be prevented. "Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days, I will rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch; go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."

Thus every thing was done which they deemed necessary, to secure the body of Jesus, and to prevent its removal by His disciples. But all these contrivances were overruled by Divine Providence, to enhance the glory which they were intended to obscure.

It was made to appear, from the testimony of these His enemies, that Jesus had expressly foretold His own resurrection; and they were led to take the most effectual method to prove, indisputably, not only that He was dead and buried,

but also that "He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures."

For while fraud was rendered impracticable, the testimony of sixty unexceptionable witnesses (the number of soldiers on guard) was added to the evidence by which the fact is supported, that it might "be perfect and entire, lacking nothing." Thus does God take the wise in their own craftiness; make the wrath of man to praise Him; and promote the purposes of His grace, by the malicious attempts of His enemies to frustrate them.

2. A second piece of presumptive evidence is, the departure of Jesus from the sepulchre. His body was deposited there publicly by His friends; and the Jewish rulers had satisfied themselves that it was there still, when they sealed the stone and set the watch. But on the third morning, it appears, the body was gone! No one, indeed, is found, who saw it go; but the tomb is empty; the stone, which blocked up the entrance, is removed; the linen rollers, in which the corpse was wrapped, are laid together in one place; and the napkin that was about the head, is folded, and laid by itself in another place; and the question is, How did all this happen?

If we examine the Gospel history, we shall find a plain and consistent account, which bears on its face the genuine features of truth. But there is an opposite statement, which it is only necessary to read, in order to detect its falsity. The guards, at first, related the case as it really was; but the chief priests and elders suborned them with bribes of money and promises of security, to say—"His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept." Is it, however, possible, that persons so timid and cowardly as the disciples, without arms or force, or wealth to bribe, could have accomplished such an undertaking? Besides, it is clear that they did not, at this time, themselves expect their Master's resurrection. But suppose that they had been enabled to get the body of Christ into their possession; how came it to pass, that they were not apprehended, and punished for the theft? The Jewish rulers had certainly the power, and they could not have wanted the disposition, to effect these objects, especially as their own reputation was so deeply involved.

Several times they threatened the disciples, and commanded them to be beaten, for proclaiming the fact of their Lord's resurrection; but at no time did they attempt to confront them, and refute their testimony.

"His disciples came by night," was the pretence, "and stole Him away while we slept." If the Roman soldiers had been

so unfaithful to their trust, as to sleep on guard, they would have feigned any report, rather than have acknowledged an offence, the penalty of which was death. And had they been guilty of this dereliction of duty, the Jewish rulers would have done their utmost to bring them to condign punishment. But how absurd, to depose to a thing which they allege to have happened while they slept! How, in that case, could they tell what was become of the body? How could they affirm that it was stolen? How could they show that the disciples had taken it away?

Seeing, then, that the body of Jesus is gone from the sepulchre, on the morning of the third day, according to His own prediction, notwithstanding all the precautions of His enemies; and that they do not produce it in a state of death, nor attempt to recover it from the disciples, nor to punish them for the alleged fraud; we are naturally, we are unavoidably, led to believe the truth of the Gospel record, and the reality of the all-important fact attested.

3. There is another circumstance, for which it is impossible to account on any other principle than on that of Jesus having risen from the dead; it is the marvellous change which took place in the apostles immediately after the period at which they stated this event to have happened. Previous to our Lord's death, they were exceedingly fearful and alarmed; they started at difficulty, and shrunk back from trial. When their Master was apprehended, they were all panic-struck, and forsook Him; nor could they recover sufficient courage to return to the scene of danger. Peter, indeed followed "afar off," and stood with the servants in the outer court, while Jesus was examined in the council chamber; but no sooner was he challenged by a servant, as being one of His disciples, than he solemnly disclaimed all acquaintance with his heavenly Master, repeating his denial "with oaths and curses." How detected were the disciples at the sufferings of Jesus! and when He expired upon the cross, under circumstances of such deep and public infamy, how near did they seem to be to a despairing abandonment of His cause!

Such were these men just before, and at the time of, our Lord's crucifixion. But mark their character and conduct afterwards. In the course of a few days, we find them openly in the temple, in the presence of the great council of the nation, and before all the people, boldly confessing and preaching that very Jesus, whom they had so recently forsaken; charging their hearers with the murder of "the Prince of life;" declaring, that

"He whom they had crucified, was raised from the dead, and become both Lord and Christ," and showing that there "is salvation in no other." When threatened, and commanded not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus, what was their language? "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye! For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." And when punished for persisting in this line of conduct, "they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

Now, how are we to account for this sudden and extraordinary alteration in the character and conduct of the apostles? The difficulty can only be solved, by admitting the fact of our Lord's resurrection. The change which had taken place in the condition of their Divine Master, produced this amazing alteration in their whole deportment. They were now assured that He was indeed risen, according as He had said. They had seen Him clothed in the robes of immortality; they had been repeatedly in His company, and had heard His well known voice, speaking to them in tones of reproof, of instruction, and of encouragement. They had attended Him to the Mount of Olives; had received His parting blessing; and had witnessed His ascent from earth to heaven—from whence He had shed forth upon them the promised influence of the Holy Ghost.

We now pass on to investigate—

II. Those proofs of our Lord's resurrection, which are derived from the testimony of credible witnesses.

This kind of evidence may be called direct and positive; and it is in this case so clear, convincing, and overpowering, as to be absolutely conclusive and irresistible. There is no way of ascertaining the reality of events, of which we have not been eye-witnesses, but by well supported testimony. This is considered sufficient to substantiate a thousand things, which have never come under our own observation, but which we, nevertheless, fully believe. Who doubts that there is such a continent as America? such an empire as China? or such a city as Rome? although he may never have set a foot in either of those places. No fact could be more capable of proof, than the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and if the testimony upon which it rests be equally good, with that by which other accredited facts are supported, it is entitled to at least equal confidence.

1. The sufficiency of the evidence, in all cases, depends upon the number of the witnesses, their qualifications, and their information on the subject to which they depose.

The witnesses of Christ's resurrection were competent in regard to numbers. "I delivered unto you," says St. Paul, "first of all that which I also received; how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve. After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all, He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

The witnesses in this case were competent, also, as it regards their qualifications. The language, conduct, and writings of the apostles, bespeak them men of sound mind, correct judgment, and good sense. They were, therefore, fully qualified for deciding on what they saw and heard; for, in a plain matter of fact, the illiterate are as capable of judging as the learned.

You will remember, that in this matter the apostles were, for a time, incredulous even to a fault. At first, they resisted the clearest and most satisfactory evidence; nor would they yield to entire conviction, until it became so overpowering, that they were compelled to banish their doubts, and to exclaim—"My Lord, and my God."

Nor were they destitute of proper and sufficient information on the subject of their evidence; for it will not be questioned, but that during a period of "forty days, in which Jesus showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them, and speaking to them of the kingdom of God," they must have had suitable and abundant occasions for ascertaining the reality of what they "saw and heard."

He was seen many days of them, who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem; He conversed with them, separately and in company; He ate and drank with them; He showed them the marks of His sufferings; and He allowed them to touch Him. No one, therefore, can consistently deny that the disciples of our Lord had the clearest proof that He was alive after His death, without renouncing altogether the evidence of sense.

2. Their competency being established, let us now examine their credibility. Every unexceptionable witness must be a person of known honesty and integrity;

for if these can be in any degree impeached, his deposition is rendered questionable, and he loses his claim to full and implicit confidence. But the character of the apostles raises their testimony above suspicion. The uprightness of their principles is clearly impressed upon the whole of their preaching, their writings, and their conduct, and is silently admitted even by their adversaries.

For while they were persecuted in various ways, and branded as ignorant fanatics, and even as madmen, their integrity was never questioned, their veracity never impeached. And who, my brethren, that considers the artless simplicity which characterises the history they have given of their Master's life and sufferings; the honesty with which they have recorded their own and each other's failings; the candour which is discoverable in their statements respecting their enemies; the patience which they displayed under trials, and the benevolence which breathed in their whole temper and behaviour; can impute to them a contrivance, of which none but the most determined impostors were capable?

The peculiarity of their circumstances furnishes them with an additional claim to our confidence and credit. Judging from the sincerity of their character, and the integrity by which they were distinguished, we might reasonably infer the truth of their declarations: and the disciples had no earthly ends to answer, no personal advantage to gain, none of the usual objects of imposture to obtain by their testimony. On the contrary, they asserted our Lord's resurrection to their own loss, and at the hazard of their lives; whilst to have denied it, would have been the certain road to wealth and honour.

It is also to be observed, that the disciples bore their testimony in Jerusalem—on the spot stained with their Master's blood, and on which they asserted His resurrection to have taken place, and within a few days, yea, hours, of the time when they declared it had occurred. They acted like men who were conscious that truth was on their side; and though they were surrounded by those who were capable of ascertaining the verity of their statements, and whose determined enmity impelled them to seize on every occasion which could be turned to their injury; yet they fearlessly challenged investigation; defied the malices of their enemies, and affirmed in the presence of them all—"We are witnesses of these things."

And as their testimony was prompt, so also it was clear and explicit. It was delivered in terms the most plain and unequivocal. "With great power, gave the

apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." And this is their deposition:—"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him God raised up the third day; and gave Him to be manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him, after He rose from the dead."

And this testimony they persisted in with undeviating constancy. They "continued steadfastly" in the attestation of the fact, before rulers and kings, amidst reproaches, privations, and sufferings; and instead of recanting or trembling, with the prospect of martyrdom before them, they firmly adhered to their testimony, and at last sealed it with their blood.

Nor were any contradictions discoverable in their evidence, calculated to invalidate its truth, or to diminish its credibility. There is a striking agreement, not only in their general statements, but also in their relations of particular and minute circumstances. They deposed before various tribunals; they were subjected to the strictest examination; yet they were never detected in prevarication, nor charged with inconsistency. They preserved the utmost concord among themselves; and their evidence has come down to us distinguished by a harmony in all its bearings, of which falsehood is incapable, and which cannot fail to produce conviction in every candid mind.

The resurrection of our Divine Redeemer, therefore, on the testimony thus examined, attains to a degree of certainty, which leaves no possible room for doubt. But there are yet higher and more convincing proofs; and these constitute—

III. The last class of evidence to be mentioned, which is Divine in its character; and, consequently, carries with it infallible certainty.

"We," said the apostles, speaking of the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, "are witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Ghost." This statement agrees with what our Lord himself affirmed:—"The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me; and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

Now the Holy Spirit bears witness of Christ's resurrection—

1. By the predictions of the prophets. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Thus inspired, they "tes-

tified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." And David spake of the resurrection of Jesus, when he said—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."

2. The Holy Spirit bears witness also to the resurrection of Jesus, by the miracles of the apostles. That they were endowed with supernatural powers, that they could speak all languages, foretell things to come, open the eyes of the blind, cast out devils, raise the dead, and perform other wonderful works, which nothing short of a Divine energy could have enabled them to achieve, was a fact so notorious, that the bitterest adversaries of their doctrine could not deny it. Nor was it ever disputed by any of the Jews, or heathens of antiquity: this was a disgrace reserved for the unbelievers of later times. The opponents of the Gospel, indeed, in the early ages, attributed the miracles wrought in confirmation of Christianity, to the influence of magic; but this very circumstance was an admission of their reality. Upon these miracles, the apostles rested the credit of their mission, and the truth of their testimony. They openly proclaimed that Jesus was raised from the dead; and that He had appointed them to be His witnesses to the world; 'in token whereof,' said they, 'He has invested us with these miraculous powers.' Hence the wonders which the apostles effected, were so many Divine attestations to the truth of our Lord's resurrection, of which they were the authorized witnesses. "They spake boldly in the Lord, who gave testimony to the Word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands."

3. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the resurrection of Christ, by the success with which the promulgation of the Gospel has been attended. For what but a Divine power could have rendered the preaching of Jesus and the resurrection, so eminently successful, as it is well known to have been, in the first ages of Christianity? It cannot be denied, that, within a few years, Christianity was promulgated throughout the Roman empire, which then contained almost the whole known world. It gained credit amongst all classes and descriptions of people. Notwithstanding the meanness of its original propagators; though they were unaided by the charms of eloquence, the influence of rank, or the power of wealth; though they were unprotected by earthly potentates, and had to contend with the most determined opposition, the tyranny of rulers, the subtleties of philosophers, the prejudices of Gentiles, and the bigotry of Jews; though their testimony was almost always unpalatable, and their religion

every where spoken against, yet "the Word of the Lord grew mightily, and prevailed." Ancient customs were abolished, deeply-rooted prejudices were overcome, heathen temples were thrown down, superstitious grown venerable by age, and interwoven with the frame of civil constitutions, were overturned. Thousands were brought over from Judaism and Paganism, to the belief and profession of the doctrine of Christ. And thus, by the simple proclamation of truth, without any outward attractions, and notwithstanding the greatest disadvantages, a religion was established, which has endured the test of eighteen hundred years, and thus clearly proved that it is built upon "a rock, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail." Surely, then, we may say, "This counsel and this work is of God, or it would, long ere now, have come to nought." "What hath God wrought?" "It is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes."

And we may observe, in conclusion, that the same truth is still successful. How many striking instances of its transforming efficacy, and saving power, are there to be seen in our own day! How many dark minds has it illumined with the light of life! How many impure hearts has it sanctified, and made meet for heaven! How many troubled consciences has it restored to peace! And how many desponding bosoms has it filled with the hope of a blissful immortality! Every true Christian has "the witness in himself."

There is such a thing as "the power of Christ's resurrection." And every one who has felt its quickening energy, raising him from a death in sin to a life of righteousness; elevating his earth-born affections and desires to invisible and eternal objects; animating his languid spirit, under the pressure of affliction, and in the prospect of death; possesses, in his own experience, and displays, in the general tenour of his conduct, an evidence that Christ is risen, which is not only satisfactory to himself, but which the enemies of the cross can neither gainsay nor resist.

This is the evidence which is of the greatest personal consequence; and after which it behoves you, my brethren, principally to seek. For it is possible to possess the most convincing outward proofs of this great fact, and to yield the assent of the understanding to its truth and importance, while the heart is an utter stranger to its renovating power, and the life exhibits not its practical effects.

If we possessed the same means and opportunities of ascertaining the certainty of our Lord's resurrection, as the apostles did, to whom "He showed Himself

alive, by many infallible proofs;" and if we were equally qualified to bear witness to the fact, as far as the observation of our senses could qualify us; yet we could derive from it no solid advantage, unless we were made acquainted with its inward efficacy, by means of a Divine faith. For what say the Scriptures? "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Here our final and eternal salvation is made to hinge upon a right belief of Christ's resurrection. The faith, however, which is intended in this passage, is not the mere nominal assent of the judgment to the truth of the fact, as it is recorded in the Gospels, and stands supported by conclusive evidence. The devils possess this, and yet "tremble," in the certain anticipation of a more dreadful doom than that under which they already groan. No. Saving faith takes in the full consent of the heart to the doctrine in all its aspects, and in all its bearings upon the experience and upon the practice; and is accompanied with a firm reliance of soul upon the infinite virtue and all-sufficiency of Christ, as "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

Where this faith is implanted by the Spirit of God, its influence will be felt and displayed; for it is not a barren or lifeless principle, but is as vital in its nature, as it is Divine in its origin. The cold, speculative assent of the mere professor may leave him as it found him; the votary of fashion, the slave of lust, "dead in trespasses and sins." But the faith, which is infallibly connected with salvation, diffuses itself over all the degenerate faculties of the soul, and stamps upon it the spiritual image of the Divine Being. It produces a transformation of character, as well as an alteration of state; and not only corrects the disorders of the mind, but regulates and adorns the conduct. "It purifies the heart, overcomes the world, and works by love." There must be no separation of the principle from the practice. If we "have received Christ Jesus the Lord," we shall "also walk in Him." "Therefore we

are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death; we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

Examine yourselves, therefore, my beloved brethren, whether you possess that faith in this all-important fact, which will stamp you as the true disciples of Christ, the heirs of eternal life? If you should be found mere professors of religion at last, what will the soundness of your creed avail you? What will your assent to the truths of Christianity profit you? What will your barren profession do for you? Mere opinions, however correct, which leave the heart unaffected, the character un sanctified, and the life unadorned "with the fruits of righteousness," will be absolutely worthless at the bar of God; and if you have nothing better with which to appear before the Judge of quick and dead, you will be consigned to the blackness of darkness for ever.

Oh! choose life, that you may live. Though the gate of mercy be strait, it is open; though the way to heaven be narrow, it is plain. The invitations, the promises, the entreaties, yea, the very threatenings of Scripture, all proclaim aloud that the salvation of the Gospel is free for all, that there is not one contrite sinner on earth excluded from its blessings. The fountain of Divine grace flows, like the stream through the desert, open to every thirsty soul who desires to drink of it.

"The dying thief rejoic'd to see,
That fountain in his day;
And there may you, though vile as he,
Wash all your sins away."

Oh! that each of us may be found amongst the number of those, who having "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," shall be admitted into the paradise above, where there shall be no more sorrow, nor pain, nor death; but where "God shall wipe all tears from our eyes."

FAREWELL.

A SERMON, BY THE REV. THOMAS MOORE FOSKETT.

Curate of Enfield, Middlesex.

TO HIS PARISHIONERS, MARCH 9, 1816.

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."—2 Cor. xiii. 11.

How emphatic to the occasion of my departure, are these words! "Finally,"—not after an epistle of thirteen chapters long; not after an absence in body, and

a presence only in spirit, as with the apostle; but after a personal ministry, devoted and faithful, of five years and three months standing, it is not only "finally," but more emphatically and truly, considering St. Paul's absence, with me, than the apostle, "finally, brethren, farewell." St. Paul's was a farewell of the subject, accompanied by a distant salutation of good wishes to his readers. Mine is a farewell of separation, carrying with it a prayerful imprecation of every spiritual blessing, joy, and comfort, upon those who have had the benefit of my personal ministry.

A ministry of five years and three months past and gone, is as a dream to look back upon. But dream as it may appear, all its images and realities will one day revive to the oblivious thought, and awaken the soul to a sense of their importance and character. There will be a day of remembrance, nay, more, a day that will reveal the work and character of every one's ministry, of what sort it has been, and what effect it has produced. In other words, with what faithfulness and zeal it has been discharged, and how it has been received and acted upon, by those who were the objects of it.

As regards the former, it is a pleasing and cheering satisfaction for me to know and feel, that faithfulness to the Word of God has ever attended my preaching, to the best of my ability and knowledge; and that zeal in doing the work of an evangelist, in my parochial ministrations, has accompanied my ministry, as far as the restricted liberty of a curate is privileged to carry its suggestions and thoughts of improvement into practice. Alas! when will the day come, when zeal shall be at liberty to exercise all its godly motions for the glory of Christ, and the spiritual edification of man, without being fettered by the restraints of authority, or chilled by the icy torpor of religion in the frigid zone; when faithfulness in handling the Word of God, and proclaiming from the pulpit, its uncompromising truths, will be endured without offence, and without complaint! O eternal Spirit! Thou that breathest into the soul of man the glowing fervours of a godly zeal, Thou that inspirest true faithfulness into the lukewarm spirit, Thou that quickenest the dulllest heart into a desire of God's glory, and a love of souls, Thou that givest light and life and spiritual energy to qualify for the ministry, Thou that art said to move every minister of our Church, to "take upon him the office of serving God, for the promotion of His glory, and the edification of His people," Thou all-sustaining, quickening,

sanctifying Agent of the Church universal, when wilt Thou descend in a more plentiful affusion upon the hearts of priests and people, and fill them with a desire of nothing but God's glory, Thy own blessed influence, and an unprejudiced love of Christ's truth Divine? For, until then, in vain will zeal burn to accomplish its more perfect work; in vain will faithfulness hope to meet a hearty welcome in the people's breast.

But, my brethren, how has this spirit descended on you? I have preached faithfully, plainly, and directly, for the most part, to the subject before me, withholding nothing of the truth of God from you, either in its doctrinal development, or its practical bearing. But has the truth been always welcome to your souls? Have you felt your hearts at all times so attuned by the Spirit of God, as to bear patiently whatever has been preached "for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness?" It is difficult, I know, to please at all times, and upon all subjects. For all have not the same heart, all have not the same measure of the Spirit, all like not the same truths. If all have not always heard, then, with the same gladness, the things preached; if the satisfaction has not on all occasions been alike, you may "forgive me this wrong." It is the fault and corruption of your own nature, not of my preaching, if I have preached the truth.

But do I seem to speak doubtfully of your satisfaction? Apart from vain glorying, may I not say, there are abundant proofs of your general satisfaction, both with my preaching and my ministry. For not to say that the poor and middle classes have again and again very generally expressed themselves more than satisfied; nay, grieved at my departure; and most of the rich have from time to time acknowledged their satisfaction in one way or another; the number of the congregation, the attendance at the altar, and the collections at the sacrament, all of which have increased since I have been here, and the last, I believe, year by year, speak loudly and unequivocally to the same truth. And to all this I may add, what is no small matter in the balance of the whole, that it has often been remarked to me by the poor, that the rich have been much more liberal, and attentive to their wants, since my sojourn among them, than ever they knew them to be before.

But what! do I speak this in the arrogance of self-conceit, or of proud boasting? No, far otherwise. For if such has been the fruit of those numerous sermons which, year by year, I have

preached, in recommendation of the claims of poverty, or of the example which I have set, in closely attending to their wants at all possible times, the glory is not mine, but God's. It is He who has sent down the plentiful dew of His grace, upon my labour of love and zeal. To His name, therefore, and goodness, be ascribed all the honour, the praise, and the returns of thankfulness.

But still it is now all come to this—“Finally, brethren, farewell.” Why, or wherefore, it is no wish of mine to stay to enquire.

Yet I am unwilling to pass on, without saying a few words upon the alleged or reported cause of this farewell. For I already begin to see, like Elijah's servant, a little cloud, like a man's hand, or, if you will, mere in the likeness of a human tongue, arising from behind the horizon of the fair sky of my ministry, and threatening, as soon as I am gone, to darken it with the winds and tempests of misrepresentations and false reports—not one, but many.

Of these, however, there is one only that I care to correct, which I trust I may do, without apology, in this farewell discourse. It has been said, then, that the curacy which I now hold has been offered to me by the present vicar, but that I refused it. I answer, that the curacy such as I now have it, and such as I had it under the late vicar, and such as it has been transferred to my successor, has never been offered to me by your vicar.

But to guard against any further mistake, I will briefly state to you what it was that he proposed to me. It was this; that I should relinquish entirely the morning duty, and take the afternoon lectureship, and be his curate upon a fixed stipend from him, with the chance of getting something more by collection from the parish. This I objected to upon grounds, the validity and reasonableness of which, he in part admitted. No other offer was made to me; but a second curate was to take my present place with the vicar.

This is the sum of the matter on this subject, and although several other statements have been made and reported, as to the cause of my going away, I believe they have little or no authority. At all events I have no disposition to canvass them here, but have a higher gratification to delight me, the gratification of knowing that whatever it is that has brought us this day to farewell, it is confessedly no fault of mine, since both you and the vicar have abundantly acknowledged yourselves satisfied.

But, alas! why do I speak of gratifica-

tion from any satisfaction of man! What is the greatest possible testimony of earthly satisfaction, compared to the satisfaction of Him, whose approbation is life, and whose satisfaction is a crown of glory? Great God of heaven, Thou knowest my chief concern is, as it ought to be, Art Thou satisfied? But how shall I know this cheering, soul-reviving truth? Can I, Thy unworthy minister, do any thing that can satisfy Thee? Not alone. But still is there no ray of evidence that Thou art satisfied? Has not success to others crowned my ministry? And yet that ministry has been exercised, for a long time past, under every disadvantage of injured speech, great suffering therefrom, and every prejudice which a weakened voice would naturally give rise to. To whom am I indebted, then, for this success? Who has made me sufficient for the work? Is it not Thou, O Lord, who didst give Thy apostle grace under his infirmity? But this is not all. Other manifestations of Thy visible providence and goodness remain to be told. When I was severely wounded on the tenderest part that a preacher of Thy Gospel could well be stricken on, and it was pronounced by one of the first of the faculty that no art could cure, no medicine heal; didst not Thou, in the mercy of Thy over-ruling providence, direct me to one, who has brought me hitherto, and preserved me, a monument of Thy goodness to all around, and a speaking witness to this people, that Thou dost not despise my ministry—that Thou art satisfied? But, O blessed God, whence comes this satisfaction from Thee to me? Nothing in me deserves, nothing can merit. No, it is the great satisfaction of Thy dear Son, that has brought down Thy satisfaction upon me. Satisfaction of highest merit to Thee, begetting satisfaction to lowest merit in me. But still as Thou hast been good and gracious in my behalf, there may be something of mine on which thine eye of satisfaction has been pleased to look down with complacency, not of merit, but as an object of grace and acceptance.

What is it? Oh! but I am become “a fool in glorying.” Ah! but bear with me in this folly; it is the overflowings of a grateful heart for mercies received. Once more, then, what is it? Is it that I have made it conscientiously my business to preach to this people the truth, regarding no pleasure or displeasure but Thine? Is it that I have been “a father to the poor,” the advocate of their cause, the proclaimer of their wants, the helper of their necessities, and a comforter of their sorrows and miseries, alike by my preaching and parochial mi-

nistrations? Is it that the voice of prayer in my own private sanctuary has mounted up upon the wings of a Saviour's love, and, ascending triumphed over death and the grave, to call for pardon and the healing virtue of the Redeemer's touch, or word, and reached the ear Divine of sovereign grace? Or is it, lastly, that Thou hast graciously heard the prayerful breathings of Thy crying and distressed poor, whose hearts, touched with a grateful sense of my strong pleadings for their liberty, have, from time to time sent forth, from every workhouse round, aspirations deep and loud, fraught with the burden of my name, up to Thy eternal throne of grace and love, thence to invoke a blessing on my head? Merciful God, are these the things that have made Thee satisfied? There is nothing in me besides. Then these are they.

But, O great Mediator, whence is this to me, that Thou shouldst deign to make any work of mine, any prayer, acceptable to the offended Majesty of heaven? For it is Thy reconciliation, Thy peace-making cross, Thy atonement, Thy work of righteousness and love, and Thy perpetual intercession at the right hand of God, that has brought down this condescension to me.

Hail, then, mysterious love!
Hail, goodness from above!
All praise and thanks be thine;
Fresh gifts of grace and help be mine.

Well then, my brethren, in taking my leave of you in the parting salutation of the apostle, "Finally, brethren, farewell," I have at least this comfort, that there is satisfaction in heaven, and satisfaction on earth, as regards the majority in this parochial locality, with the way in which I have done the work of an evangelist. And what greater comfort could I have? what greater desire?

But if this be my comfort, what shall be yours? Should it not be this, to make God your friend, by living up to the exhortation in the text—"Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of peace and love shall be with you."

"Farewell" could scarcely greet you with salutation of happier good, could scarcely leave behind it a surer comforter. For if you aspire after the perfection of Christ, perfection in grace, and faith, and all good works; if you prayerfully seek the comfort of His love—the righteousness, peace, and joy of His kingdom, in the Holy Ghost; if you cultivate "unity of spirit in the bond of peace," being of one mind and one fellowship, if you cannot be of one judgment, with all saints, living in peace, as far as it is possible, with all; then will you make the God of

love and peace your friend; then will you have comfort and joy sufficient to console you for the departure of a Paul, much more of me. Happy they who always carry this Friend about with them, "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother," a Friend that, go where they may, or be separated from whom they will, can comfort them, "with joy unspeakable," and full of hope. But such a Friend is not to be obtained for you, by any mere farewell wish or prayer of mine. No; you must have hearts that can reciprocate love, souls that can return spiritual affection for love Divine, minds attuned to the spirit and work of Christ. For God is only a Friend to those who "love Him, because He first loved them;" who, having the mind of Christ, count it their meat to do His will, and to work the work of His Son.

If you would have comfort and peace, then, when I am gone, or when I am present, you must be "always abounding in the work of the Lord." For there is no joy or tranquillity equal to that which arises from the consciousness of having diligently and faithfully devoted yourselves to His service. Could you experience the blessedness of long-spent services in the work which Christ has given you to perform, (and there are some of you, I believe, that can,) you would not part with it for any thing this world can give. It would be more prized by you than friendship's dearest charm; for whatever friendship may do to "sharpen the countenance of a man," or whatever comfort may redound from heart answering to heart in man to man, it will not compare with that peace and joy of the Holy Ghost, which nothing can disturb, nothing take away. It will not compare with the friendship of Him, whose lightest favour is a world of comfort, and whose inspiring presence is a heaven of joy. "Ye are my friends," said Christ, "if ye do whatsoever I command you"—(John xv. 14). This is the assurance of promise, from Him who cannot lie. It is a guarantee of favour and co-operation, in whatever we may do in the name and obedience of Jesus. It is the answer of our hope, and confidence, and joy, both sure and steadfast.

Go forth, then, my brethren, in the strength of this assurance, and labour diligently in the cause of Christ. Say not, one, what can I do? Or another, I can do nothing. Or a third, I have no knowledge, no opportunity. Have you a heart for the work, a desire of Christ in your soul, a disposition to promote your own and others' eternal and temporal welfare? If you have, all within

you is power, all without you a world of opportunity.

But what! shall I, in this last discourse, take you over the vast field of Christian opportunity, usefulness, and duty, which lies so openly to view before every one, that has a heart to be the friend of Jesus? Has not this been done again and again, during my five years ministry? May I not be excused, then, from this office? Nay, but would I be excused? Not entirely. For there is one branch of Christian obligation, that formed such a prominent feature in the character of Jesus Himself,—and not in His character alone, but in His teaching—that I am most anxious to urge it upon your notice once again for the last time.

It is the great work of Christian beneficence—that sublime and exalted standard of Gospel excellency, by which all will be tried at the last great day of assize, “when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all his holy angels with Him,” to demand of every one an account of the talents of opportunity and usefulness with which he has been entrusted. The great Judge Himself has thought proper to identify His interests and feelings with those of the poorest of His creatures. He, who, when on earth, “had not where to lay His head,” has embarked the sufferings and privations of his humble representatives in the same vessel with His own,—the vessel of His crucified body, and made the burden one. Hence, all their distresses and afflictions are His. He has a common participation in their necessities and trials, and a mutual joy in their relief. He weeps when they weep, and rejoices when they rejoice. Does He see, for instance, some labourer in yonder field, hungry and thirsty, toiling at the plough to provide bread for himself and family? His pitying eye looks down with tenderness and love, and feels his wants as though they had been His own. Does He behold yonder stranger, homeless and naked, exposed to the inclemency of a cold winter’s season? He longs to see some charitable Christian “take him in, and clothe him.” In yonder cottage, does He see some Lazarus, sick and bedridden, without any to help or to comfort? His afflicted soul weeps with longing desire to see him visited by some friend of humanity, some consoling Christian. Or does He behold some aged couple, pious and good, who have spent the days

of their strength in earning an honest livelihood, driven at last by poverty and want to yonder workhouse—“prison”—there to be separated, and herded amongst the ungodly and profane? His bowels of mercy yearn to come unto them, in the person of some deliverer, or comforting friend. This is His own gracious representation of His condescending interest in the wants and sufferings of the helpless poor:—“For I was an hungered,” says He, “and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.” You see, then, it is the glory of the Redeemer to sympathise with the distresses and ills of poverty. It was His delight, to relieve them in His humanity; it is His sovereign will, that they should be relieved, in His glorification. Can stronger motive be wanted, then, to induce you to the same mind that is in Christ, to the same work that He delighted in?

It is this, that has prompted us so often to bring this duty of Christian beneficence prominently before you. It is this, that has urged us to do so now, for the last time. Farewell, then, opportunity! Nay, but shall it be for ever farewell? Shall we never speak again to you in this great cause of Divine humanity? Shall helpless distress, and the tender sympathies of man, the object alike of such deep concern in the soul of Deity, never find an advocate, never any appeal from us again? We trust not; we mean not so. It is our desire, though absent in body, to be ever effectually present in spirit; though dead to the parish, to be ever speaking to you in the living character of this sermon.

To this end it is printed; that when we are gone, and clean forgotten out of mind, there may yet be this monitor to put you in remembrance. Hear the last admonition, then, of him who leaves you this monitor, whilst he remains; and engrave it on your souls. “The poor ye have always with you; me ye have not always.” Read this sermon when I am gone, and REMEMBER THE POOR.

And now, what remains to be said, but “Finally, brethren, farewell?” Farewell all around: farewell, rich; farewell, poor; farewell, neither rich nor poor. “And the God of love and peace be with you” all. Amen, Amen.

EASE FOR THE TROUBLED SPIRIT.

A SERMON.

BY THE REV. CHARLES BRADLEY, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. JAMES'S CHURCH, CLAPHAM, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
APRIL 6, 1846.

"In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul."—
Psalm xciv. 19.

A TEXT of this kind shows us forcibly the power of Divine grace in the human heart: how much it can do to sustain and cheer the heart. The world may afflict a believer, and pain him; but if the grace which God has given him, is in active exercise in his soul, the world cannot make him unhappy. It rather adds by its ill treatment to his happiness; for it brings God and his soul nearer together—God the fountain of all happiness, the rest and satisfaction of his soul.

This psalm was evidently written by a deeply afflicted man. The wicked, he says, were triumphing over him; and had been so for a long while. He could find no one on earth to take his part against them. "Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers?" he asks in the sixteenth verse; "or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? And it seemed too, as though God had abandoned him. His enemies thought so, and he seems to have been almost ready to think so himself. But what was the fact? All this time the Lord was secretly pouring consolation into his soul, and in the end made that consolation abundant. In appearance a wretched, he was in reality a happy man; suffering, yet comforted; yea, the text says, delighted,—*"Thy comforts delight my soul."*

We must consider, first, his sorrow; and then, his comfort under it. The evil; and the remedy.

1. In his sorrow, there are two things for us to notice: the source, and the greatness of it.

1. The source of it, you may say, is doubtless the ill treatment he was experiencing. But not so, brethren; it arose, he says, from his own mind—his own thoughts. Our Prayer-Book version of the passage makes this clear; the word translated here "thoughts," is rendered there "sorrows." The one translation explains the other; the psalmist means thoughts that engender sorrows; disturbed, sorrowful and distressing thoughts.

But who can keep these out of his mind when trouble comes, or indeed when it does not come? None of us, brethren. The best of us are liable at all times to these sources of disquietude. Some of us suffer more from them, than from all our outward afflictions put together.

To enumerate them all, would be an

endless task; but some we may mention.

There are thoughts concerning our own spiritual state and condition, which are often painful to us. "Is Christ my Saviour? or is He not? Is this heart of mine a really converted heart? or still a hard, ungodly, unclean one? Am I one of the sheep of Christ—one that the good Shepherd in His love and power has brought to Himself, and will eventually take to His home in the heavens? or am I one of the filthy swine, that He can now take no delight in, and that in His holiness He will one day cast for ever from Him?"

And there are thoughts of the same character as to our future spiritual course and condition. If we really are the Lord's, how we shall keep so: how we shall ever get through the difficulties and temptations we see before us, and bear up under the conflict that is going on within us, and keep alive the faith and hope and love, that so frequently even now seem expiring.

And then come thoughts of the same troublous concern about death and judgment. How it will be with us when we come to die: how we shall bear the sinkings of dissolving nature; the going into a new, strange, untried world; the first sight there of a holy God; the standing before Him, as sinners, to be judged.

And this world too, how many harassing, distressing thoughts does that give rise to within us! We profess to have overcome, and triumphed over it; but the battle, dear brethren, we at times find has not been half fought nor won. "My Saviour has told me, to "take no thought for the morrow;" He has promised to think of it for me, and provide against it for me; nay, He has told me, that He has already so provided for it; and oh! that I could leave it entirely in His hands! But it is not always I can. What shall I do when this or that thing comes, which I see impending? I would "provide things honest in the sight of all men;" but how, amid the difficulties I am placed in, shall I ever do it? But children must be provided for; how shall I provide for them? They will want a friend to watch over them when I am gone; who will befriend them? They may go before me; if so, how shall I bear the loss! "And these afflictions," the soul says at other times, "that are even now come upon me,—why are they come? why are they

as multiplied one upon another, and so long continued? I want to be enlightened; I cannot understand the Lord's dealings with me; the more I think, the more I am perplexed and disturbed.

And sometimes we can excite anxious thoughts in our minds, even from the absence of afflicting providences. 'I read in my Bible,' the soul says, 'that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth;" but He chastens not me. The sun rises brightly day after day upon me; my days pass in peace and quietness; oh! if I were a child of God, could this be so?'

And then, brethren, when in our better moments we forget ourselves, and look at the world and Church around us, here again our thoughts often trouble us. We mourn over the world's sins, and distractions and miseries; we are ready to tremble often for the ark, the cause, the Church, the glory of God. The Lord says to us—"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth;" but we are afraid He will not be exalted—we find it hard to be still. We are as anxious for the Church and for the cause of Christ, as though Christ were not that great and lofty Being we know He is—the omnipotent King of Zion—but some petty prince, who cannot maintain his own cause, from whose hands the sceptre is ready to fall because of weakness.

I need not go on. You all know, that thinking is sometimes painful and distressing work. All of us, some in one way and some in another, have found out with this psalmist, that "thoughts" are frequently only another name for "sorrows."

2. Observe, now, the greatness of this man's distress.

This is forcibly expressed in the text, though in our translation it is scarcely obvious. The word in it rendered "thoughts," scholars tell us, signifies originally the small branches of trees. The idea in the psalmist's mind appears to be this. 'Look at a tree, with its branches shooting in every direction, entangling and entwining themselves one with another; let the wind take them—see how they feel it, how restless they become and confused, beating against and striving one with another. Now my mind is like that tree. I have a great many thoughts in it, and thoughts which are continually shifting and changing; they are perplexed and agitated thoughts, battling one with another. There is no keeping the mind quiet under them; they bring disorder into it, as well as sorrow.' And mark the word "multitude" in the text; there is exactly the same idea in that. It signifies more than number: confusion.

Think of a crowd collected and hurrying about: 'so,' says the psalmist, 'are my thoughts. I have a crowd of them in my mind, and a restless confused crowd. One painful thought is bad enough, but I have many; a multitude of them; an almost countless, a disturbed throng.'

We now, then, understand the case we have before us. This man's sorrow arose, at this time, from disquieting thoughts within his own breast; and his sorrow was great, because these thoughts were many, and at the same time tumultuous.

'But what,' some light-hearted persons may be ready to say, 'is such sorrow to us? We know nothing of it; why should we be told of it?' Dear brethren, here is one reason why you should be told of it, that you may see and learn, that God need not go far, at any time, to afflict any one of us. He can do, this text says, without calling to His aid sickness, or losses, or disappointments, or any outward calamities; there is a scourge ready prepared for Him within our own breasts. He has only to turn our own minds, our own thoughts, loose on us, and we shall be miserable enough.

We know not, brethren, what there is in our hearts—how much evil, and how many seeds of misery and bitterness. God in His mercy restrains for a time the workings of our own minds; but now and then He lets a bitter branch shoot up, that we may see there is bitterness within us. But the harvest of evil, and the harvest of misery—He reserves that to a distant day. The Lord grant, that none of you may reap it. But reap it you will, brethren, if you make no effort now to escape it. It is a part of that "wrath to come," which we must have fall on us, if we do not now flee from it. Continue to make light of God's "great salvation," and you will understand at last too well, that there is no wretchedness like that which is born within a man's own bosom; which springs out of a man's own mind—a thinking, active, disquieted, guilty, God-abandoned mind—a heart given up to itself, its own evils, its own wild thoughts and workings. Oh! dread that, brethren; dread it more than poverty, or bereavement, or any of the mortal ills "that flesh is heir to." Oh! dread it as you would dread hell. Let us all pray—'Lord! cleanse Thou the thoughts of our hearts within us. Whatever Thou take from us, take not Thy Spirit, Thy restraining Spirit, from us. Never in Thine anger leave us to ourselves.'

II. Let us now go on to our second point: the psalmist's comfort in his sorrow.

1. Look, first, at the source of this. It came from God. "My thoughts," he says; they constituted his sorrow; it sprung

from himself. But "*Thy comforts*," he says; his consolations were from God.

Here again, brethren, let me remind you, we may afflict and torment *ourselves*, but it is the living God only who can comfort us. It is easy for us to set our minds at work, and raise a storm; but if we want to be quieted, if we want a calm there—a real calm, not a lethargy—it is beyond our power to make one. The Lord, the Lord from His high throne above us, must speak, and bid the tumult be still.

But when the psalmist says "*Thy comforts*," he means more than comforts of which God is the author or giver. God is the author and giver of all our comforts—of all the earthly comforts that surround us; they are all the work and gift of His gracious hand. Hence He is called "*the Father of mercies*"—of mercies generally; as our Church calls Him in her General Thanksgiving—"the Father of *all mercies*." He is the God, the Scriptures tell us, "*of all consolation*." We are to understand *here* such comforts as are peculiarly and altogether God's; such as flow at once from God; not from Him through creatures to us, but from Him immediately to us without the intervention of creatures. The comforts that we get from His attributes—from meditating on, and what we call realising them: the comforts we get from His promises—believing and hoping in Him; and the comforts of His presence, He drawing near to our souls and shining into them—we knowing He is near us, conscious of it by the light and happiness and renewed strength within us. "*Thy comforts*"—the comforts we get from the Lord Jesus Christ: from looking at Him; considering Him; thinking of His person, and offices, and blood, and righteousness, and intercession, and exaltation, and glory, and His second coming; our meeting Him, seeing Him, being like Him. "*Thy comforts*"—the comforts which come from the Holy Spirit, "*the Comforter*:" when He opens the Scriptures to us, or speaks to us through ceremonies or ordinances, or witnesses within us of our adoption of God; shining in on His own work of grace in our hearts; enabling us to see that work, and to see in it God's peculiar, eternal love to us; not opening to us the book of life, and showing us our names there, but doing something that makes us almost as joyful as though that book were opened to us; showing us the hand of God in our own souls—His converting, saving hand—His hand apprehending us as His own; making us feel, as it were, His grasp of love, and feel too that it is a grasp which He will never loosen.

2. Mark, next, the character of these comforts.

They correspond with the psalmist's affliction or sorrow. Were the sorrows "*within him*;" not superficial, but low down (as his words seem to imply) in his heart? These comforts also were within him;" he does not say '*they delight me*,' but "*they delight my soul*"—enter deeply within me, get to the diseased, wounded part, and carry comfort there. And were his sorrows great? was he suffering from "*a multitude of thoughts*?" His comforts also were great and numerous; as he says in another place, "*I will go into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercies*"—surrounded with mercies—carrying within me comforts so many that I cannot count them. You remember how he prays in the fifty-first psalm; when he supplicates the pardon of his sins, he beseeches God to have mercy on him "*according to the multitude of His tender mercies*." He knew his sins to be great; he wanted a pardon as great. And so here, brethren, with his sorrows; they were many, but not more in number than the comforts God gave him. He could find something in God, to set against every distressing thought within him.

In some versions of this passage, this idea is more clearly expressed. They read it thus: "*according to the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight me*." "*My troublous thoughts I find to be the measure of Thy consolations*. Thou lookest at my sorrows, to see how many and how great they are; and then Thou takest of Thy comforts, and pourest them into my soul, till Thy comforts equal my sorrows and surpass them." Changing disquietude, not simply into peace, observe, but into pleasure: "*delight*." He does not say, '*Thy comforts strengthen*,' or '*sustain*,' but "*Thy comforts delight my soul*."

Here is another blessed truth taught us, brethren. We can soon empty earthly things of all the good they contain. We sometimes feel, in trouble, as though we had got from earthly friends all the comfort they could give us. But God is a fountain of good; there is no emptying of Him. In Him there is a well of consolation; or rather, many wells of it: there is no drawing of them dry. As our sufferings abound, so He can make our consolations also abound; and superabound, rising above our sufferings, so that we are ready at times to forget them. Does He send heavy and deep afflictions?—then is the hour in which the soul often discovers for the first time how rich the Lord is in consolation, how mighty to comfort, as he had found Him

before "mighty to save." Then, dear brethren, is the time to look upwards, and say—"Now, Lord, comfort me; now let the long looked-for abundance of Thy consolations come. Thou hast long sustained, long upheld me; where should I have been, hadst Thou not? But now, Lord, now in this hour of trouble, "*de-light* my soul." There is joy in Thee—joy in Thee for sinners such as I am; now, O Lord, let my soul receive of it. It has long thirsted, long waited for it; oh! let it come."

And this joy, brethren, these comforts, let me add, are frequently imparted to the believer at such seasons as these; when he least expects them. The text

imparts this also. The psalmist says, that it was in the very thick of his disquieting thoughts, "in the multitude" of them, when his heart was full of them, when they were at the very worst and he was suffering most from them—it was then that the Lord's comforts came and delighted him. And look at the eighteenth verse; there is the same idea. "When I said, My foot slippeth," when I thought myself in the very act of falling, "Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." The Lord's mercies and the Lord's comforts are often the nearest to us, when we think them the farthest away. In this sense, as well as in many others, our extremity becomes His opportunity. So some of you, brethren, I doubt not, have found. There have been times, when you have thought, and thought again, on this point and that, and all to no purpose; you have taken counsel, and much counsel with your soul, but the only fruit of it has been, you have had sorrow in your heart daily; your hope has failed you, your spiritual strength has failed you, darkness has seemed to be spreading itself all around and within you. Have you never found, brethren, that this has been the time God has chosen for sending relief—for pouring into your souls from Himself such beams of light and consolation, as have made your whole souls wonder and rejoice together? There was no delight, no sensible comfort within you, while the crowd was collecting—while only a few disquieting thoughts or things troubled you; but when the crowd was collected—when trouble without, or trouble within, or perhaps both together came on you in their full measure and force, then God's comforts came and "*de-lighted* your souls." In the "*evening* time," when you thought that darkness was about to set in, the thick darkness of a long night, in the "*evening* time" He made it "*light*."

So it has been with us, brethren, and

so probably it will be with us many times again. We must learn to strengthen our faith from our past happy experience; learn to look for "the goodness of the Lord" in the days that are to come, just as we have experienced it in the days that are past. While we make this our prayer—"Thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation;" let us make this our resolution—"Thou hast been my help, O Lord; therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice."

Is there a man here, who is suffering from "thoughts within him," about which I have scarcely said one word? a man, whom God by His Spirit has made to think of his ways, and who at this moment is disquieted with thoughts concerning the sinfulness of those ways, and the end to which they may lead him? Is there any man here, whose chief sorrows are sorrows about a guilty soul, and what he thinks a near opening hell? Oh! if there is such a man here, (and would that these walls contained hundreds of such!) I would say to him from this text—not one atom of comfort, real safe comfort, can you ever get, till you look out of yourself, and entirely out of yourself for it. You want pardon, you want help, you want hope, you want salvation; dear brethren, you may think about these things till you drop into the grave, but you will never get one of them till you have found out that mere thinking will never do—will never turn a guilty soul into a pardoned one, will never take off from a man's guilty head the burden of his great multitude of sins, will never close an open hell, nor open a shut-up heaven. These things are all made over—the blessings you want are all made over to the Lord Jesus Christ; they are dwelling in Him for you; and there is no way of getting them, but by looking to Him for them, making Him your pardon, Him your help, Him your hope, Him your salvation. It is a mercy, that you have been led to think; it is thinking, that through God's mercy has brought you acquainted with your real condition. It has discovered to you the evil; it has done its work. But it can do no more than that, brethren. It is a looking upwards—it is believing—that must bring you the remedy; a going out of yourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ; a turning of thoughtfulness into prayerfulness; a turning of painful musings within you, into earnest supplications to that Saviour who is above you. It is making Him, to your souls, the spring of all you want, and all you desire.

A REMEDY AGAINST THE FEAR OF MAN.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. GILBERT CHESNUTT, M.A.

PREACHED AT TRINITY CHURCH, TRINITY SQUARE, NEWINGTON, ON SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 9, 1845.

"They lie in the hell like sheep: death gnaweth upon them, and the righteous shall have dominion over them in the morning: their beauty shall consume in the sepulchre out of their dwelling. But God hath delivered my soul from the place of hell: for He shall receive me."—Psalm xlix. 14, 15—(The Translation in the Prayer Book.)

WHILE the world was yet young, and its wisdom and experience in its early infancy, men seem to have been exceedingly perplexed and puzzled at the inequalities of fortune, and the other unaccountable circumstances of human life. It seemed to them strange, and inconsistent with the government of the world by a wise and Almighty Providence, that the wicked should ever be prosperous, and the good and religious in oppressed circumstances. The psalmist, therefore, in this dark and mysterious dealing of Providence, being inspired with an insight into its most hidden mysteries, in a magnificent exordium summons all to hear a lesson of the highest interest and importance. "Oh! hear ye this, all ye people," saith he; "pounder it with your ears, all ye that dwell in the world; high and low, rich and poor, one with another." "My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and my heart shall muse of understanding. I will incline mine ear to the parable, and show my dark speech upon the harp."

It is plain, then, that he has something to communicate, which to the men of that generation might truly be called a parable of wisdom, and a "dark speech," to be solved and explained by the wise and the religious. But according to our translation, whether in the Bible, or in the older one in our Prayer Book, (whence the text is taken), little more is revealed by him, than the fact, sufficiently obvious, that the righteous are often, in this life, oppressed by the powerful and wicked; and that there should be some future state of being, some other world, where these apparent inconsistencies in the dealings of Providence should be set to rights. This is clearly intimated; but the chief burden of the psalm only seems to explain the sentiments of the worldly, sensual and ungodly, which they used for quieting the apprehensions of conscience and the fears of death; namely, that man was only like the beasts which perished for ever, and therefore had no account to render hereafter for his actions. It is true that the doctrine of a future state is clearly revealed; and this was a subject of the highest interest and importance; but still so grand an opening may well lead us to consider, if the Psalm does not reveal to us something of the *means* by which all this was to be brought about;

and, accordingly, the most ancient translators, with the greatest divines of the Church in all ages, have searched for something even beyond this doctrine, in the Psalm before us; they have sought in its mystic language for the "parable" and the "dark" speech, which the psalmist has so magnificently promised us. Neither have they searched in vain; as we shall see, in endeavouring, after the example of these searchers into the "deep things of God," to explain the language of this portion of Holy Scripture.

According to a great divine, Bishop Horsley, the title of the Psalm stands thus: "Upon death. To the Precentor" (or master-singer): "A song for the sons of Korah." But whether it was composed by one of the sons of Korah, or only to be sung by them in the temple-service, is by no means clear. Neither is it certain, who those sons of Korah were. It is probable, that they were the descendants of that Korah, who perished with Dathan and Abiram in the wilderness, for their rebellion against the Lord; some of whose family seem certainly to have been spared. But, after all, these titles of the psalm, as you find them in the Bible, form no part of the Holy Scripture. They are of the most obscure and uncertain meaning, like the word "*Selah*," which also occurs several times; and therefore I dwell not on this title, further than to notice, that it seems to point out this as one of the most ancient of the psalms, and as being written long before the time of David. Indeed, the language of the psalm, especially in the original, seems to bear a remarkable resemblance to that of the book of Job, the most ancient book in the Bible. Its subject, also, seems the same; namely, the mysterious ways of Providence, whereby the righteous are often oppressed, and the wicked prosperous; with a declaration of a future state, where all these inequalities should be rectified. But then Job knew more than this; he had an insight into the *means* by which the righteous should be delivered: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." And

then from this knowledge, sprung up in the soul of the afflicted one, faith and trust: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

And it is exactly so with the blessed writer of the psalm before us. After his magnificent beginning, after summoning the whole world to hear his "parable," and his "dark speech," he goes on to say; "Wherefore should I fear in the days of wickedness, and when the wickedness of my *heels* compasseth me round about?" The words "wickedness of my *heels*," scarcely afford an intelligible sense; the translators probably understood them as equivalent to "the wickedness of my *footsteps*, or my goings"—the wickedness of my ways, or conduct; and supposed the psalmist to allude to that dread hour of death, when the alarmed and affrighted sinner would find, to his cost, the insufficiency of all earthly trusts—of worldly goods or riches—to avert the dread penalty of death. "There be some that put their trust in goods, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches: but no man may deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him. For it cost more to redeem their souls: so that he must let that alone for ever; yea, though he live long, and see not the grave." Neither can the utmost wisdom of the wise save them, "for they die, as well as the ignorant and foolish, and leave their riches for others. And yet they think," says he, "that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places shall endure from one generation to another; and call the lands after their own names."

The psalmist, we see, is going to find out some remedy against fear; the fear of men, the fear of the rich and powerful persecutor, and the fear of that bodily death, which it was in his power to inflict. And he finds this remedy in the same way in which the afflicted Job found it; namely, in the doctrine of a Redeemer, who should one day raise him from the "dust of death," and make him have dominion with the righteous in the bright morning of the resurrection. For such is the meaning of those obscure words; "For it cost more to redeem their souls; so that he must let that alone for ever:" or as it is in the Bible, "for the redemption of their souls is precious; and it ceaseth for ever." Where Bishop Horsley, following all the great authorities in the matter, translates the words thus:—"No man"—that is, no mere man—"can by any means redeem his brother: he cannot give unto God an atonement for himself; for costly is the ransom of their soul. And he that ceaseth for ever, yet shall live: to all eternity he shall not see

corruption." And what is this, but the very saying of the Redeemer—"He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live?" Here, then, was the "parable," the "dark saying" of the psalmist, the enigma to be solved and explained by the children of wisdom; that though no man, that is, no mere man, could redeem his brother; though the wise and the ignorant could not escape death; still the righteous should have "dominion in the morning." God would find out a way of rescuing them from the grasp of death; and this should be done by One, who was not a mere man; but who, being both God and Man, should save those eternally who believed in Him. And in this belief the psalmist found a real remedy against all fear; for in the most desponding circumstances—when "the wickedness of his heels," that is, of his *supplanters* (for such is the meaning of the word)—of those who lay in wait for him, to cause him to die and perish; when the wickedness of these powerful enemies, who would cause him to stumble and fall, and ruin him both in body and soul, surrounded him on all sides. Then, after briefly glancing at the folly of men, who, though they saw generation after generation sinking into death, still went on like their fathers, looking only to earthly goods, and placing all their happiness in this life, like the beasts which perish; he draws aside the dread curtain which hides the unseen world from mortal sight, and shows them utterly powerless, stripped of all in which they placed their happiness, and awaiting that dread hour, when they should rise to "shame and confusion," and the righteous should have "dominion over them."

The text, as explained by Bishop Horsley, is as follows:—

"Like a flock of sheep they are appointed unto *hades*;"

Death is their shepherd.

The just shall have dominion over them in the morning;

And their beauty is [appointed] to decay; *Hades* is the dwelling for them.

But God shall redeem my soul from the power of *hades*,

For He shall receive me."

That is, take me to Himself, through that Redeemer, who is both God and man. And then, after showing the folly of these men in trusting to earthly goods, he says; "And as long as thou doest well to thine ownself, men will praise thee"—or rather, in the other world the lost sinner will praise thee, because thou doest well to thyself. In other words, there is a state of existence, where the rich and powerful shall praise the righteous; shall acknowledge their wisdom and foresight

* The preacher, for greater clearness, has at old Saxon language, simply meant "the invisible"

in doing well to themselves, in doing all things necessary to secure the favour of God in the present life.

What a contrast is here drawn between the poor and afflicted servants of God in this world, and their proud oppressors in the world to come! "They lie in the hell," or hades, "like a flock of sheep;" and "Death is their shepherd." They are utterly powerless, like a flock of sheep reserved for slaughter. And what a shepherd keeps them! even "death"—that stern, inexorable power, who watches over them only to reserve them for the slaughter of the great day. In the "morning" of that day, "the righteous shall have dominion over them;" while they are to awake to shame and confusion, the righteous shall arise in glory, and honour, and immortality. "Know ye not," saith St. Paul, "that we" that is, we Christians—shall "judge angels?" Ye shall "sit upon twelve thrones," saith Christ to the apostles. "We know not what we shall be," saith St. John; "but when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." Such is the hope of the righteous. But in the mean time, the beauty of these proud oppressors is appointed to decay, and hades is their dwelling. All their pomp, and splendour, and power, shall come to nothing; in the unseen world, they shall be reduced to a state, where they might well envy even the most wretched of the children of men.

I. In remarking upon the words of the text, we see the strange contrast between man in his present state, and in hades—the world of spirits. Here, they are endued with power; there, they are like a flock of sheep, utterly powerless, stripped of all, and every thing in which they trusted! And what a shepherd have they over them!—even death, that awful power, which there keeps and restrains them in his iron grasp, till the trumpet shall awaken them to judgment. And is it possible, my brethren, for a moment to reflect on this great change which awaits us all,—“high and low, rich and poor, one with another;” is it possible, I say, to reflect on this change, without the most awful feelings? We may not have been proud oppressors; we may not have been, in any grievous sense, the enemies of God; we may have no great sins, or crimes, to answer for; still, we all have something which we love, something in which we trust, something in which we boasted ourselves. But only think of that state to which death will bring us! When our souls shall depart from this body, and the angel of death shall carry us into hades—the world of spirits, we shall be utterly helpless and powerless, stripped of everything on which we here set our af-

fections, and, "like a flock of sheep," awaiting only the summons for slaughter. In that dread pen-fold, the mighty and powerful of the earth are utterly helpless. There, the rich have lost their riches, and are poor as the poorest; there, those who were strong and able, are reduced to utter weakness; there, the lovely and amiable are for ever deprived of those objects of affection, on which they boasted upon earth. Oh! what a change! Power, and riches, and bodily strength, and wives, and children, and relatives, and friends, and faces dearer than life itself—all, all are gone; and the soul, in the world of spirits, finds itself amid new relations and new scenes, and is unable to recall those earthly joys and comforts, which once made life delightful. To look upon the dead bones of a skeleton, is a painful thing. To see those holes, which eyes did once inhabit; those limbs, which once were full of life and activity; that mouth, which once was full of wit, and eloquence and speech, but now is silent, in the silence and stillness of death: this is indeed an appalling sight. But what is this, compared with the feelings with which we should contemplate the soul in the world of spirits? In looking at the wreck of the bodily frame, we only behold death; consciousness resides not in those bones; they are insensible to the honour of friends or the insults of enemies: if we spurn them, they do not even move; if we embrace them, they show no sign of affection. But that soul which once informed them, that living being which once inhabited them—oh! if we could follow that spirit beyond the grave, if we could penetrate into that invisible world which it inhabits, how different would be the scene! It still lives; it still remembers; it still loves, and hates, and feels all the sensibilities of its former abode on earth, but is deprived of the earthly objects which called forth its sympathies and affections. There, husbands are deprived of their wives, and parents of their children, and men of their friends, and misers of their riches, and voluptuaries of their pleasures, and tradesmen of their business, and labourers of their employments; they are all utterly powerless and poor, and stripped of all things; "they lie in hades like a flock of sheep;" and "death is the shepherd" who watches over them. Ye, then, who trust in any earthly trust, think upon this. Think on this state, to which we all shall be so shortly reduced. We shall all soon be spirits in a world of spirits, amid new scenes and relations, with everything changed around us.

The utter powerlessness of men in that state, is represented by their being compared to "a flock of sheep," which

are the most helpless of creatures; and the end is signified, by their being watched over by the "shepherd's" death, only to keep them for the day of slaughter. And all this is not a mere parable, or representation—the mere dream of a poet, or some image merely formed to surprise and delight us; but it is the dread reality, in which I, and you, and all shall, within a few years, find ourselves placed. Yes, we shall be placed amid these tremendous realities, not for days, or months, or years, but for ever! The only change will be caused by the resurrection-trumpet, which will bring the souls of the ungodly to a heavier punishment; but will be the note of joy, and the signal of redemption to the righteous.

"But God shall redeem my soul from the power of hades: for He shall receive me to Himself." Here was the hope of the psalmist—from this prison of the invisible world, God would redeem him. And therefore he could await there in joyful expectation the bright morning of the resurrection, when he should once more be endued with power, and energy, and activity; yes, should "have the dominion," and share it with the other "righteous"—with the children of the resurrection, and with Christ himself.

But, meanwhile, far different is the state of those departed ghosts, who have no such hope. "While he lived," saith the psalmist, "he counted himself a happy man;" or rather, "he blessed his soul;" and he shall (in hades) "praise thee, because thou doest well to thyself;" that is, like the rich man in the parable of our Lord, bitterly shall he feel the truth of that saying of father Abraham—"Son, remember, thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now, he is comforted and thou art tormented." And, therefore, he shall bless or praise the "righteous," who were preparing for eternity, whilst he was only living to himself and to the world; who were sowing to the Spirit, and are now reaping the glorious harvest of immortal happiness, whilst he was sowing only to the flesh, and is now reaping its corruption and its misery. Oh! how bitter must be the thoughts of these miserable souls, when they remember the warnings they have slighted, and the opportunities they have for ever thrown away; and see those, who once were looked upon by them with scorn and contempt, joyfully looking forward to a redemption, in which they themselves can have no share!

II. For it is the prospect of this redemption, which was another, and a still greater remedy against fear, to the soul of the psalmist. He not only pictures to

himself the utter misery and helplessness which these his enemies should be reduced to after death, but he comforts himself with the thought, that he himself should be redeemed from the state of death, and his soul delivered from the prison of hades. Though his soul should go into those dread regions, still there it should be safe and unharmed, and should be redeemed from thence, and reunited to his redeemed body.

And no need is there of our being surprised, that any one who cherished as a leading and living principle of his heart, such a hope as this, should have found in it a remedy against all fear whatsoever. When "the wickedness of his heels," that is, the wickedness of those who lay in wait for him, surrounded him on all sides, even then he could feel the truth of that solemn warning of our Lord—"Fear not them which can only kill the body, but after that have no more that they can do; but fear Him, who after He hath destroyed the body, is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." But it may be said, brethren, that in the present day we are not surrounded by great and powerful persecutors, or by enemies which try to ruin us both in body and soul; and the first rising thought of your hearts will probably be, that our condition is so utterly unlike that of the psalmist before us, that we can derive no lesson from his example. But, men and brethren, are we to be told, or need we to be told, that the fear of man is the one great stumbling-block in the way of our salvation now, even as it was in the early ages of the world? Half our sins—and more than half, half our vices—and more than half, half our follies—and more than half, half our irreligion—and more than half, arises from the fear of our fellow-men, in some form or other. Are we not all continually thinking upon what others will say or think of us, and shaping our conduct, and our words, and actions, so as to suit the opinions and the practices of the world around us? And what is this, but that fear of man, which (as Scripture saith) "bringeth a snare?" Do not men adopt opinions and practices, not because they are convinced that they are right, but merely because they do not wish to be singular? And what is this, but the fear of man? Do not many put themselves to great trouble and pains, and incur expenses in dress, in furniture, in living, and in amusement and dissipation, merely that they may stand well in the eyes of their friends and neighbours, and may be like other people? And what is this, but the fear of man? Nay, especially in certain ranks of life, do not many ostentatiously practice sins, and adopt follies and vices, merely to be like

others? And in every rank of life, are there not some—and of young men, especially are there not very many—who even practice sins ostentatiously, merely to show their spirit, and convince the world that they are not poor, cowardly, and contemptible creatures? And what is this, but the fear of their fellow-men? When tempted thus, therefore, by the fear of what the post calls

———"the world's dread laugh;"

when thus tempted to forget our supreme obligation to the God who claims our sole obedience, let us do as the psalmist did, take a look into the unseen world, and behold those whom we now stand in awe of, lying helpless, and powerless, and miserable, "like a flock of sheep." Their scorn and their mockeries, their fancied wisdom and supposed influence, where are they now? "Truly when they die," saith he, "they shall carry nought away with them; their glory shall not follow them. Their beauty is appointed to decay; *hades* is the dwelling for them." And was it for such as these—the creatures of a day, as frail as the flower of the fields—that we dared to slight that God, whose power is as great as it is eternal?—who alone can rescue us from this world of spirits, when once the angels of death have carried us into its unseen regions.

Oh! brethren, if we thus thought of the utter contemptibleness and nothingness of man, when compared with God, and of the short-lived nature of the injuries and inconveniences which man can occasion us, compared with the just sentence of that eternal Being, who can "destroy both body and soul in hell," never should we put man in the place of God, or prefer to please men more than God. Surrounded on all sides by the "wickedness of his heels"—of those, that is, who would trip him up, and cause him to fall—the psalmist found in these awful revelations a sure and certain remedy against the fear of men, even though they were among the mighty and powerful of the earth; and shall we, then, shrink from the path of duty, because we fear the frowns, or the censure, or the ridicule, or the curled lip of scorn, of men—of those, who "when their breath goeth forth from them, die, and are turned again to their dust, and all whose thoughts perish?"

III. But not so is the case with the "righteous." It is true, that "no mere man can by any means redeem his brother; he cannot give unto God an atonement for himself; for costly is the ransom of their soul;" yet, notwithstanding

ing this, the psalmist goes on, to assure us—"And he that ceaseth for ever, yet shall live; to all eternity he shall not see corruption. But God shall redeem my soul from the power of *hades*: for He shall receive me to Himself."

Here, then, was the "parable, and the dark speech," promised by the psalmist;—Although "no mere man could redeem his brother," yet man should be redeemed, so as not to see corruption to all eternity; and therefore One more than man was to accomplish this mighty work. This was indeed very obscure, and almost beyond the possibility of conjecture, in the age of the psalmist, though now that the whole mystery of the Divine nature of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity is laid open to the Church, we see how One that was truly a man, did redeem His brethren, because He was *more* than man. How sorely the Jews were puzzled by this "dark saying," even in the time of Christ, may be known, from their being at a loss to answer the question—"If David, call the Messiah Lord, how is He then his Son?" And how hard it has been in every age to men to believe this doctrine, is plain, from the numerous heresies and schisms which have arisen in the Church about it, and the difficulty with which it has been all along maintained. Nay, the dreadful apostasy of the whole Mahomedan world, owes much of its origin, success, and continuance, to our persevering belief in one who is both God and man.

But I dwell on this no longer, than to observe, that the psalmist, like St. Stephen, when his enemies surrounded him on all sides, found a remedy against fear, in looking up to heaven to that exalted Redeemer, who sits there in glory; yes, he sees Him, like Stephen, rising from the throne of His majesty, to show His readiness to help, and comfort, and deliver him. Yes, when we are afraid, we may truly say—"Why should I fear? Behold, I see the heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." Yes, even in the grave our flesh shall "rest in hope;" for God will not leave "my soul in *hades*, neither will He suffer His holy one to see corruption;" but He will show us the path of life; "in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Yes, for even death and *hades* cannot separate us from His love, who hath said of Himself—"I am He that liveth and was dead: and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of *hades* and of death."

THE LIVING WATERS OF THE GOSPEL.

A SERMON, BY THE REV. TIMOTHY GIBSON, M.A.

PREACHED AT CARLISLE EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, KENNINGTON LANE,
ON THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 3, 1845.

On a behalf of The Church of England Young Men's Society for Aiding Missions at Home and Abroad.

"And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; and in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one."—Zechariah xiv. 8, 9.

THE Bible is full of promises—they meet us in every page—they encourage us in every direction; and one attribute is attached to each of them—that of unchangeableness; "they are all yea, and amen, in Christ Jesus." Some of them refer to temporal concerns; these the Christian does not overlook; he is thankful for them. But he especially admires those which refer to spiritual things. The satisfaction he feels in meditating on these, affords ample proof that he is seeking "first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," and that his "conversation is in heaven; from whence also he is looking for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

There are other promises which serve to show what spirit we are of—they relate to the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom. Selfishness may rejoice in a promise which refers to personal interest; but the Christian looks beyond this; his heart expands with gratitude, while reading those "exceeding great and precious promises," which ensure the good of others, and the triumphs of the Gospel to the end of time. The true believer, at all times, even when sorrowful, can rejoice in the prosperity of the Church. His eyes sparkle with pleasure when he hears that the Word of the Lord, has "free course and is glorified;" he can say, with David, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." To all present, who possess this truly Catholic spirit, the text will afford delight. "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter it shall be. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: and in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name One."

In calling your attention to the two parts of which this passage consists, I shall notice—

First, the dispensation of Christianity; and, secondly, its glorious results.

May God the Holy Spirit bless our meditations.

I. The dispensation of Christianity. "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half

of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be."

Here are four things worthy of attention

1. Its representation. It is called—"living waters." The sacred writers often employ this image, and there is great justness in the application. Grace is more necessary to the soul, than water is to the body. If we have not this water of life, our pollution will remain for ever, and we shall ever continue unfit for admission into the kingdom of God. This living water softens, purifies, and refreshes the soul; it fertilizes. "The wilderness and the solitary place are made glad by it, and it causes the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose."

It is described as "living water"—water that springs up. It is not compared to a lake, but to a river; not to a pool, but to a spring. Jesus said to the woman of Samaria—"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Rising, or springing up, in thought, in desire, in prayer, in pursuit, until it even reaches heaven. Water, it is said, will always reach its level; that is, it will rise to an equal height with the source from whence it flows; and such is the principle on which this living water reaches heaven: there is its source, from thence it flows.

All is vitality where this is: this can revive the drooping, and cheer the dying; this "living water" is the life of the soul. Here is the all healing balm, which alone can reach the emergency of the sinner's case, which will allay the throbbings of an anxious mind—impart peace within and peace above; a peace, which, like the untroubled surface of the lake on a calm summer's evening, is not only tranquil, but reflects on its bosom the very tranquillity of the skies. It produces a principle of life, which strengthens amidst bodily debility, and grows amidst bodily decay; a blessed habit of thought and feeling, which rests on no uncertainty, and is exposed to no vicissitudes; and, however the subjects of this life are judged of by men, they are pre-

cious and honourable in the sight of God.

2. Its origin. These "living waters" were to "go out of Jerusalem." Were we to consider this as denoting the Church of God, we should not err. But the word is here to be taken literally. Our blessed Lord was of Jewish parents; the apostles were Jews; and most of the first disciples were Jews. It was in Jerusalem, that Jesus stood up in the great day of the feast, and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." There He proclaimed Himself "the way, the truth, and the life." On Calvary, He offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin; in Jerusalem, He received those stripes, by which we are healed; there, He arose from the dead; from thence He ascended to heaven. In the Acts of the Apostles, we discover how these "living waters," issuing from the land of Judea, spread abroad in every direction.

We may consider this, first, as the accomplishment of prophecy; and as thus furnishing a proof of the truth of Christianity. It had been said, that "the Lord would send the rod of His strength out of Zion;" that "out of Zion should go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Judea was the land chosen of God to be the scene of the most wonderful of all His works—works which are to fill immensity with glory, and eternity with praise.

Secondly: we may regard this fact as proving—that Christianity can bear investigation. Had the apostles been impostors, they would not have thought of publishing the things which they did in Jerusalem; had not the things happened there, which they have recorded, every inhabitant could have shown the falsehood of their statements. Their testimony was examined by Jews and heathens, by philosophers and rabbis; providence so ordered these circumstances, that the testimony of the apostles might remain unsuspected. Jerusalem was continued in existence forty years after the resurrection of our Lord, that all the Jews might examine the evidence concerning it; and obtain authentic proof of the truth of Christianity. Had these men published the facts on which the Gospel rests, in remote countries; it might have been supposed, that distance of place, by rendering it difficult for their hearers to obtain exact information, had facilitated the establishment of error. But they fearlessly announced the wonderful facts of the Christian history, in the face of enemies; and, in a place, where every information could be obtained; they challenged investigation, they courted inquiry. Yea, they preached in Jerusalem; in the synagogues they unfolded and displayed the banner of the cross, and set up tokens of victory on the very spot, where the

instrument of their Master's sufferings had been set up. In Jerusalem, "the Word of God grew mightily, and prevailed."

Thirdly: consider this circumstance as showing—the goodness of God our Saviour. Guilt is aggravated by privilege. No nation was ever so favoured as the Jews. God had sent them prophets, whom they slew. He said, "I will send My Son, they will reverence Him"—Him they crucified. Yet a few days after this, Peter rose up and said—"Unto you first, God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Yes, to them, first; this living water sprang up at the feet of those who had shed the Saviour's blood. God was determined, that, if they perished, their destruction should be of themselves. Jesus sent the apostles to preach the Gospel, first, at Jerusalem. How does this fact set forth the kindness and love of our Saviour! They might have said—"We are willing to go to the most distant regions of the earth, we will gladly go round the globe, but send us not to Jerusalem." And it is as if He had replied, 'Yes, go there; ascend the hill of Calvary, preach first from that hallowed spot; and, if amongst the crowd that shall surround you, you shall observe the man who placed the crown of thorns on My head, tell him I have a crown of glory for him; if you should meet with him, who plunged the spear into My side, tell him to come to Me, by repentance, for his sins, and faith in that blood which he spilt—and he shall not come in vain.'

Let us now observe—

3. The directions of these "living waters"—"half of them toward the former sea; and half of them toward the hinder sea." Rivers flow towards the sea. The language here is figurative; the figure is of that kind, in which a part, and especially a leading part, is put for the whole. The meaning is, that these "living waters" were to spread all abroad. The passage cannot refer to Judaism, that was confined to Judea, and necessarily so, every male being obliged to go up to Jerusalem once in the year—a practice which never could have become universal. Judaism was but "the shadow of good things to come," and was to be abolished by the Gospel dispensation.

The Jewish Church was a local stationary witness for God, and the duty of the world was to come and receive its testimony; the Christian Church is not local and stationary, but is to go to the world. The Jewish Church was an oracle, and the world was expected to come and inquire at its shrine; the Christian Church is an oracle also, but instead of waiting for the world to come to it, it is com-

manded to "go into all the world, and to testify the Gospel of the grace of God to every creature." Thus Judea, which was the resting place of the old religion, now became the starting point of the Christian Church, for the conversion of the world. And as the waiting and stationary character of the former economy had been emblematically represented by the bending cherubim over the mercy-seat; so the new, or Christian dispensation, was henceforth to be represented by "another mighty angel, flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, that dwell on the earth."

No dispensation of God can be final and perfect, but that which is universal. Hence we read—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Man, considered in every point of view, is a guilty creature; and Christianity presents pardon through the blood of the cross; it makes known the means by which his nature may be renovated, and he made meet for "an inheritance amongst the saints in light."

And these blessings, procured by the Saviour's death, are offered freely to all men. All are to be called and invited from "the world lying in the wicked one," into the fold of Christ; for "it is not the will of the Father, that one of His little ones should perish."

4. Consider its perpetuity. "In summer and in winter shall it be." The most unfavourable seasons are here mentioned; yet they are not able to hinder the flow and efficacy of these living waters. Earthly rivers may be frozen by the cold of winter, or their streams be dried up by the heat of summer; not so with the river of life. Blessed be God, the power of truth is not paralysed; it has gone forth into many lands; it has become more vigorous by age—more triumphant by conflict. Yet it will find it at this moment in far distant regions, and in obscure and solitary isles. These healing waters are still spreading; the invitation to partake of them is now as free as ever. Nations are crowding to share in the blessings they impart; but there is no diminution; they are as ample, as rich in quality and as varied in kind, as when the words of invitation were first uttered on the summit of Zion, and in the streets of Jerusalem.

By changing the image, it is contrasted with that which is most perishable: "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away: but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever." Everything of an earthly nature tends to

decay: however excellent it may appear, however valuable it may be, considered in itself, or however desirous we may be of retaining it, mutability and dissolution are written upon all. But here is "the plant of renown"—"the tree of life," which "bears twelve manner of fruits;" and which shall never cease to yield in the paradise above. For ages, already, has the Gospel shed its influence among the sons of men. The powers of darkness have done all they could to destroy those "leaves, which are for the healing of the nations;" this tree of life has been surrounded by enemies. There the savage barbarian, the subtle philosopher, the pharisee, the infidel, and the profligate, have assembled for its destruction—but in vain! Who can extinguish the sun? Who can grasp the ocean in his hand? As well may feeble mortals attempt to do those, as to injure that which is more dear to God, than all the material systems created by His all-powerful hand. "It endureth for ever." Though enemies oppose, ignorance and infidelity strive, and the powers of the world unite against it—it shall prevail. All the laws of nature must be reversed, "the sun turned into darkness and the moon into blood," rather than the purposes of Jehovah should be disannulled. The Gospel must finally triumph. All mankind, of every age and nation, shall be raised and assembled, but none shall be called to witness the extirpation of the Gospel. It is, therefore, justly designated "everlasting," for it shall continue to the end of time, become victorious over all nations, and its happy effects be felt for ever in a better world.

The Christian must shortly feel the stroke of mortality; his heart and flesh must fail; but in that solemn moment he will find, more than ever, the suitableness of the Gospel. Yes, believe, when not a creature in the world can be of any service to you, this will not leave you comfortless, but will remain your support to the last. Then, when closing your eyes on all earthly scenes, when leaving your dearest friends, you shall sing—"O death, where is Thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

II. Having thus noticed the dispensation of Christianity, we proceed to consider its glorious results. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; and in that day there shall be one Lord, and His name One."

It is impossible to think of the introducing of Christianity, without expecting great results. Many nations have assumed a new character, at particular times; the arts and sciences, at different

periods, have advanced to great perfection: but the effects of Christianity are unparalleled; and so they are represented—"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree." "The eyes of the blind are opened, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up."

Let us attend to the prophetic representation in the text. Observe what a change of imagery. Instead of saying, as we might have expected, that, as the effect of these living waters, all would be fragrance, verdure, and fertility, the prophet says—"The Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord, and His name one." Such a change of figure is common in the sacred writings; they sometimes gloriously rise above the rules of human composition. The effects of Christianity are described in two ways.

1. By universal subjection. "The Lord shall be king over all the earth."

At first sight, this seems to announce no more than what He is already; He is called "the God of the whole earth." But we must distinguish between right and acknowledgment. "The cattle upon a thousand hills, are the Lord's," and He has a right to the universal homage of His creatures; but this is not always acknowledged. How many millions are there, who, if not in so many words, yet, by their lives, dispute His claims, and say "Who is the Lord, that we should obey Him? What profit shall we have, if we serve Him?"

Still, the grand design of Christianity is, to make men feel their obligations to God, and to teach them to say—"Other lords have had dominion over us; but now by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name." There is a difference between God's providential, and His spiritual government. He is "king over all the earth," now, in the former sense. "The hearts of all men are in His hand, and He turneth them as the rivers of water, whithersoever He will;" "He performeth all things after the counsel of His own will; none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" But the great thing to be attained is, for God to reign in us, by His grace; for Christ to reign in the heart, in the conscience, and in the affections. God makes us "willing, in the day of His power;" willing to acknowledge Him as our king, to love Him, to pray for His cause, to lay out ourselves in His service, and for the promotion of His glory. But this subjection is not yet universal; many nations, on the surface of the earth, have yet heard no call of the Saviour's voice; and have not had even a glimpse of the Saviour's glory. We have not yet seen "all

things put under His feet," though we have distinct and positive testimony, that there is yet to arrive a period in the world's history, when the Gospel shall become the property of our whole race.

Yes; however limited the effects of Christianity may now be, the time is approaching when they shall be universal. Whatever you see that is lovely in individuals, in families, or in Christian communities, shall then be general. The love of Christ is the mighty flame that shall purify the world. Paradise will return again, and earth resemble heaven. The period is hastening on, when every day will be a Sabbath day, and every house the house of God; when the beams of love will shine from every human dwelling, peace and joy be the constant residents at every fire-side, the rich will be the Lord's almoners, the poor rich in faith, giving glory to God. Kings shall be the nursing fathers, and queens the nursing mothers of the Church. Then no more shall be heard the hoarse clangor of the battle trumpet, no more shall the weapons of death be prepared against the day of slaughter, but "swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks," and the world shall become one vast temple of concord and unity, consecrated to the love of God, and filled with the Redeemer's glory.

2. By uniformity of homage. "In that day there shall be one Lord, and His name one." Here the image changes again, and the prophet leads us from the palace to the temple.

"There shall be one Lord." This oneness does not exclude personal distinctions in the Divine essence. Socinians charge us with inconsistency of belief, because we maintain there are Three Persons in one God; and insinuate, by calling themselves Unitarians, that they are the only persons, who maintain the belief of one God. But the charge is untrue; for while we hold that there are Three Persons existing in the being of Jehovah, we say also—"The Lord our God is one Lord."

I am far from attempting to speculate on the sublime and mysterious doctrine of the Trinity; indeed, I feel assured, that great injury has been done to the cause of truth, by speculation; and that, from attempts to explain this doctrine by a variety of comparisons, unnecessary occasion has been afforded to the enemies of Christianity for blasphemy. We freely admit that this doctrine is a mystery,—a mystery, in the strongest sense of the word. But this forms no valid objection to its truth. Is it reasonable that a creature, who cannot shut his eyes, or raise his hand, without a mystery, should be offended, because, in what God has revealed concerning His own infinite na-

ture, he finds something which he cannot understand? Is it reasonable, that a creature, who feels himself baffled, in his greatest efforts of intellect, by the vegetation of a blade of grass, or the nature of the vital principle which moves the wing of the smallest insect that glitters in the sunbeam, should be offended, because he cannot comprehend the mode of existence of the infinite God?

"In pride, in reasoning pride our error lies;
All would be gods, and rush into the skies."

"In that day there shall be one Lord." Now there are lords many, and gods many. Papists say they have but one God, and declare they are not guilty of idolatry; but they have a multitude of saints, to whom they offer prayers, and what is this but idolatry? Many have idols in their hearts. Gold is an idol, worshipped by thousands. Pleasure is the goddess, at whose shrine multitudes pay their homage. And honour has a temple, in which numbers assemble, presenting to this false deity that affection and adoration, which exclusively belong to the only true and living Jehovah.

But the time is coming, when all these idols shall be utterly destroyed. "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

"And His name one." The Lord shall be known, by all the tribes of mankind, and in all the places of His dominion, as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, of His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Then "the Word of the Lord shall have free course, and be glorified." "The Spirit shall be poured out from on high." Then shall the children of Abra-

"look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn," and their conversion will be to the Gentile Church, as "life from the dead." Men shall live and love as brethren. Long cherished animosities in the Church shall terminate in a season of mutual forbearance and love; the doctrine and discipline of the Christian faith, in their combined relation to each other, shall be universally understood and faithfully adhered to; and the Church, blessed with the presence of her Lord, shall shine forth, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Then the Bible will be universally revered; then, in a most emphatic sense, shall Christ "see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied." The converts of Zion shall be numerous as the drops of morning dew; the messengers of peace shall hasten from one kingdom to another; the trumpet of jubilee shall resound from pole to pole, and "all

the kingdoms of the world, shall have become the kingdoms of our God, and of His Christ."

What a prospect thus opens to our view! What a condition does this describe! When all shall acknowledge and worship one, and the same God; and He, the King of glory, the King of grace! Methinks, I hear unbelief inquiring—"Who shall see such a day?" "If the Lord make windows in heaven, this thing may be."

Remember, that "the counsel of the Lord standeth sure; and that the thoughts of His heart endure unto all generations." But there are difficulties in the way. What are these to Jehovah? "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel, thou shalt become a plain." "And He shall bring forth the headstone, with shoutings of Grace, grace unto it."

The slowness of the Gospel in making progress, has been considered one of the greatest mysteries attendant on Christianity, but this must be viewed in reference to ourselves, and not in reference to God. It is no mystery to Him. He sees the end from the beginning. He is perfectly acquainted with the whole process. And He does all things well. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

But it is time to bring home the subject to our own minds. Christianity has reached this land, the Gospel has been continued amongst us, notwithstanding all our ingratitude and rebellion. The Gospel has reached you. And if it come into a neighbourhood, and men will not hear it, or if they hear it, and are careless about it; in both cases they are guilty. Yes, my brethren, be assured, that though you may refuse it, or be indifferent about it, yet you cannot get rid of your responsibility. It is like your immortality, which you may render either your greatest blessing, or your greatest curse, according to the use you make of it; but you cannot divest yourselves of it. So it is with the Gospel; it must have some effect, it cannot be preached in vain. If it do not soften, it will harden; if it do not cure, it will kill. Hence it is said of the ministers of the Gospel—"They are unto God a sweet-smelling savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that are lost; to the one a savour of life unto life, but to the other a savour of death unto death. If you now leave the house of God unaffected, and should, at length, die unpardoned; your state will be worse than that of the impenitent Jews of old. "For," say the Scriptures, "if they that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three wit-

nesses; of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God; and have counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and have done despite unto the Spirit of grace!" Yes, the condition of such will be far worse than that of those, who never had the Gospel, who were never invited to Christ. Stop, then, my fellow sinner; reflect on your danger; tremble at your folly; turn your eyes to a dying Saviour, approach His cross, and say—"Lord, unto whom can I go, but unto Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Those of you who know something of the Gospel by experience, will be anxious to become instrumental in conveying its blessings to others. You may do this, my brethren, most efficiently, by giving your liberal support to the excellent Society, for whose interests I have the privilege of pleading before you. I have been favoured, by one of the secretaries, with an interesting account of the origin and progress of "The Church of England Young Men's Society for aiding Missions at Home and Abroad," which enables me to present you with the most prominent features of its history. In 1841, some pious young men in the Eastern part of London were led to form an Association called "The Finsbury and Shoreditch Working Men's Bible and Missionary Society." After about fifteen months, it was deemed advisable to improve its constitution, and to denominate it "The Finsbury and Shoreditch Church Missionary Association." The working of the machinery of the Society, in process of time, supplied the committee and supporters of the Association, with various important and weighty reasons for adopting its present name.

"The Church of England Young Men's Society for aiding Missions at Home and Abroad," was formed in June, 1841, by the union of two Metropolitan Associations, involving the same object, viz., 'The London and Westminster Young Men's Church Missionary Association,' and 'The City of London Young Men's Society for aiding Christian Missions at Home and Abroad.' The now united Society has for its object, the diffusion of a missionary spirit among young men, and the collection of funds in aid of the various departments of missionary exertion in connexion with the Church of England, i. e. Missions to the Heathen, the Jews, Home Missions, and Colonial Missions.

"The first object is embraced by the Church Missionary Society, which seeks to evangelize the heathen world.

"The injunction of our Lord to preach

the Gospel to every creature, includes all the races of mankind: the sable African, the olive Asiatic, and the red Indian, equally claim our regard. The Church Missionary Society has long laboured among these, having numerous stations in Western Africa, the three presidencies of India, New Zealand, the West Indies, and North West America.

"The second object is contemplated by the LONDON SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONGST THE JEWS, whose exertions are directed to the children of Abraham, God's ancient people.

"They, of all the human race, have been most overlooked by the Christian Church, and, till lately, no effort has been made, since the first centuries, to bring the Gospel to bear upon them. Yet their claims on Christian sympathy are even greater than those of any of the rest of the great family of man. 'Beginning at Jerusalem,' was the instruction given to guide the apostles in their work: 'To the Jew first, and afterwards to the Gentile,' is the divinely annunciated order for our missionary progress.

"The third object is comprised in the operations of the Church Pastoral-Aid Society, which recognizes the missionary claims of our own land.

"The rapid growth of population in the manufacturing and trading districts of England, and the absence of any proportionate increase in the provision for their spiritual necessities, have left many parts of our country in a state of deep destitution of the means of grace. The Church Pastoral-Aid Society is constituted to meet the case, and its operations have been extensively useful. It has been the means of locating Clergymen and Lay-Assistants, by whom new congregations have been formed, schools established, and the Gospel made known, where, otherwise, it might never have been heard.

"The fourth object is included in the sphere of labour occupied by the Colonial Church Society, which extends its sympathy to our fellow-countrymen abroad.

"Whilst none can fail to perceive the prior claims of our home population, the spiritual interests of those, who, for various reasons, have left our shores for the colonial dependencies of England, next demand our earnest attention. The Colonial Church Society at present directs its operations to Western Australia, the Cape of Good Hope, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward's Island, Malta, and the Bahamas. It also embraces a field of Christian usefulness not contemplated by any other Society; namely, the spiritual care of British residents in foreign lands. In this department it acts by appointing clergymen to

various continental towns, and by affording assistance to those already established.

"The Committee confine themselves to this brief statement of the designs and operations of these several Institutions; that evangelical character, which constitutes the chief claim of all of them, is, it is believed, sufficiently known.

"Young men constitute a very numerous class; they possess capabilities, and are heirs to an influence, which render it important to secure their interest in the missionary work. As Sunday-school teachers, their energies have been rendered available to the Christian Church to a very considerable extent, which proves the possibility of enlarging their sphere of usefulness.

"The Committee, therefore, entreat their brethren resident in the South of the Metropolis, to come forward and aid in this important work, assuring them, from their own experience, that they will find it a source of great personal happiness, and also a means of extensive usefulness in the cause of that Saviour, who has so peculiar a claim upon their talents and opportunities, having purchased them with His own blood."

I would just say to the young men who are present, you are the hope of our benevolent institutions, the hope of the country, the hope of the Church. See how many of our fathers in this glorious cause have entered into their rest, and how many "hoary heads are a crown of glory," to those who remain. The duty rests on you, of endeavouring to catch their mantle as it falls, and to imbibes their spirit, as the chariot and horses of fire are taking them to heaven.

You cannot bear me zealous in this cause too soon. This Society is suited to the exertions of all; from the prince to the peasant, from lisping infancy to hoary age. Oh! parents, let the first link that binds your offspring to their species, bind them to the cause of Christian missions; and as they grow up in life, they will find it hard to tear them asunder. I know that you cannot give grace to your children; but God can; and if you cause them to subscribe to the support of His cause in the earth, He will bless the act to them; and who can tell what influence it may have on their future conduct and lives?

Perhaps I am addressing some Sunday School teachers this evening; let me impress on their minds this one fact: if every Sunday School were to furnish but one pound to the missionary cause, per annum, taking the number of schools so low as ten thousand, there would be an annual income of ten thousand

pounds, at once placed at the disposal of the friends of missions; and if every child who is able, would but subscribe *one penny per quarter*, more than the large sum I have named would probably be realised.

Christian young men, I would remind you, that youthful auxiliaries are always valuable in any good and noble cause. And shall we look to you in vain? Will you—active and vigorous as you are—neglect that which the aged and dying delight to aid? No. You will not forsake this cause; you will rally round it. It is the cause of your fathers; the cause of your fathers' God; and this night you will pledge yourselves anew, and devote your efforts to His service.

You have leisure, which is denied to those who are more aged, and more devoted to business. You have an influence, also, which but few can resist. If there are any in this congregation, who have not yet engaged as collectors, let them commence at once; and let those who are too young for this work, do what they can to contribute to the work. There are relations, to whom you cannot appeal in such a cause in vain. There is a melting eloquence in the address of a child; oh! let it be employed, for Christ, and for the poor perishing heathen!

In a word; my brethren, you profess to love the Saviour: oh! could you see Him standing at the door, soliciting your liberality as you go out; could you see Him pleading for sinners, and saying, 'I left heaven for you, I assumed human nature for you, I was born in a stable for you, I endured poverty for you, I was nailed to the cross for you, I bled and died for you, and now I am here to ask you to do something for Me,' I am sure, that such an appeal from Him would be irresistible; there would be no reserve, no keeping back; but each of you would say—

"Take what I have, 'tis all my store;
More should'st thou have, if I had more."

Well, the Saviour is here: remember His own words—"Wherever two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." And if you give to-night according to the ability with which God has blessed you, actuated by a principle of love to Christ, and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the salvation of souls, He will observe your labour of love, for His name's sake. His blessing, "which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow," will distinguish you in this world; and hereafter, in the great and last day, He will own you before an assembled universe, and say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto these My brethren, ye did it unto Me; enter into the joy of your Lord."

THE SIN AND DANGER OF A CHRISTIAN NATION ASSISTING
TO TEACH FALSEHOOD.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A.

PREACHED AT CAMDEN CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
APRIL 13, 1845.

The Sunday before the second reading, in the House of Commons, of the Bill "for the better government of the College established at Maynooth, for the education of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion."

"Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation."—Isaiah xxxiii. 6.

THE revelations which God hath made to the great human family, are addressed to the whole man. Every faculty of his nature, however impaired by want of opportunity, or however modified by national institutions, is spoken to—provided for—presumed upon, as an integral portion of his moral constitution, and therefore essential to the completeness of his happiness. Creation has no useless atoms; Providence hath no "wheels" that roll not; and man has not, or ought not to have, any unemployed or idle powers. True, so great a change has passed over these powers, and so deeply has corruption tainted the pure springs of thought and feeling, that we sometimes find parts of our moral nature so uncomely, that we wonder what could have been their original designation, or how even in an unfallen state they were to subserve the ends of human happiness. But this difficulty is not peculiar to the mixed fashion of our fallen humanity. When we say that there is nothing without some appointed use in the kingdom of nature, that there are no flowers which breathe a wasted fragrance, and no gems which shine in caverned uselessness, we rather affirm that which the Divine attributes render a necessary, than that which our own reason could demonstrate as an obvious truth; and in like manner, when we find the Almighty pronouncing of the finished architecture of creation, of which man was the chief corner-stone and prime, that "He saw every thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good," we feel justified in concluding

ing that every faculty of the human soul, as well as every fibre of the human frame, must always in its proper use and place contribute to the happiness of man.

Man, therefore, is an enemy to himself as well as to his species, not only when he leaves any portion of this complex moral system unprovided for, but also when, in framing exhortations ostensibly connected with one set of faculties, he loses sight of the concurrent influence and operation of another. The wants of the body, the faculties of the mind, the anticipations which stretch forward to another world, and the sympathies which unite more immediately with this, are all active operation at the same moment of time; and we destroy the well-adjusted balance of our physical and moral powers, as much when, addressing man as an intellectual being, we forget that he is a moral one, as we should do were we to address him only as a creature formed for eternity, and to overlook the extent to which he is necessarily influenced by the solicitudes and ties of time.

This wise and thoughtful adjustment to the various parts of our moral mechanism, is beautifully exhibited to us in the pages of revelation. Revealed for one object only, and dwelling on one undivided theme, namely, the schooling immortal spirits for eternity, it never forgets that man has other interests which press upon him too; so that the body with its faculties, the mind with its powers, the heart with its varied affections, and the world with its contending claims, all meet with

that consideration, which should prove to us, that whilst any one and all our powers are open to abuse, there is not one which the Creator designed to eradicate.

It is, however, to man as an intellectual being, that Scripture most frequently addresses itself, when pressing on us the work of preparation for heaven. Whether it is to put honour on that ennobling faculty, which distinguishes us from all else that breathes, or because the superstructure of Christian graces can be most safely reared on the broad foundation of religious knowledge, the fact is certain, that "wisdom," "understanding" and "knowledge" are put as convertible terms for religion, and the contraries as destructive to the best interests of the soul. That a peculiar and restricted kind of knowledge is here intended, will be evident as our argument proceeds; but still it is knowledge, which is here spoken of as needful for the soul, and through which instrumentally the Almighty bids us look for the greatest national and domestic blessings. For, says the prophet, "wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation."

We propose, therefore, for reasons which perhaps it may not be difficult to conjecture, to enlarge (though in the most general terms,) on the connexion which God, and not man, has appointed shall ever subsist, between the maintenance and diffusion of His own blessed truth, and the happiness, social, moral and domestic, of those whom His grace hath singled out to be partakers of Gospel light. The heathen, in his blindness, may bow down before wood and stone, and the times of this involuntary ignorance "God may wink at;" but when Nadab and Abihu—possessors, yes, even guardians, of the pure truth of God—presumptuously, though perhaps they thought expediently, burned strange fire upon the altar, the Almighty from heaven testified His displeasure against such open encouragement of error, and "there went out fire from His indignant presence, to destroy and consume them both."

In discoursing upon the connexion between the preservation of our national truth and the extension of our national happiness, it may be well to touch, first, upon the truths which our religion teaches; then, the several duties which it enjoins; and lastly, the dangers which

it has to encounter, both from the world and from our own hearts.

I. We would dwell, first, on the revealed truths and facts, which religion hath brought to light.

"That the soul be without knowledge, is not good," says the wise man; but then we may ask—is it a necessary corollary from this, that it must always be good for the soul to possess knowledge, and proportionably good as this knowledge is more varied and enlarged? Is there any necessary connexion between knowledge and purity? between science and morality? between an accession to our store of truths, and an addition to our motives to secure the great ends of life? Is a man enabled to see his own distance from God the better, because he can calculate the distance of the remotest star? Is it by the possession of talents, which could bind as it were by a spell the wills of other men, that he acquires a new ascendancy over his own? Might he not be able to classify all the affinities of matter, and to analyse all the combination of the universe, and yet be a stranger to that spiritual analysis, which tries the reins and proves the hearts, and invokes the light of Heaven to its succour, to see whether to our hearts there yet cleaves "any wicked way," which might keep us from life everlasting? If so, it is plain, that whatever happiness may be connected with the enlargement of our intellectual resources, it is not happiness for the soul; it is not happiness, that would bring out our higher faculties, but happiness which might consist—and has consisted—with an utter denial of the supreme Being, and an entire forgetfulness of the world to come. No; if we look for the production of moral results, we must put into activity moral engines. The study of physics would help us but little to guide the ploughshare; neither would a map of the stars enable us to find out the way to heaven.

These remarks, it will be seen, apply to that sophistry of modern times, which teaches us that all education, whether with religion or without it, would elevate the moral feelings of a people, and insure their being better men and better subjects. But how painfully glaring does this sophistry become, when the education proposed to be given, is education not without religion; but opposed to reli-

gion; when we have to endow at the public cost a system, which does despite to the pure truth of God, which poisons the spring of public morals, which throws the countenance of religion over treasons, stratagems and spoils, and which would commend the extirpation of pure Christianity as "doing God service!"

No, brethren: let the knowledge given to the youthful mind be scriptural knowledge, and the facts which are first impressed on its unoccupied tablets Bible facts, and the whole philosophy of human motives is in favour of such knowledge leading to the best moral results. For the Bible not only explains to us what God is in His own nature, but also what He is to us. It sets Him before us as the proprietor and lord of all we have, as well as the giver and the source of all we look for; as having a right to all the homage which our souls can render, and, following up to its most hidden springs every motive which could sway our conduct, as a Being to whose searching glance "all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid." Moreover the Bible—the Protestant Bible—brings before me the perfect justice of God, as illustrated in the mighty scheme of human redemption; the absolute sovereignty of God, as alone entitled to the infallible trust and confidence of the human spirit; the boundless love of God, as compassionating a dying world, and setting before its guilty sons the open door of immortality; and the covenant grace of God, whereby not for "works of righteousness which we have done," still less for works of supererogation which others have done, but "according to His own mercy He saves us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Is it not manifest, therefore, that the right apprehension and reception of such truths as these, must exercise an influence on moral conduct? Are they not addressed to those very hopes and fears, which constitute the chief springs of human action? Do they not bear with a direct and almost resistless leverage on that mighty engine of the soul—the natural conscience, deepening its sense of right, echoing its fears of retribution, and testifying secretly of a Judge, who despite the Papal indulgence, or the priestly indorsement of "venial sin," shall drag all undiscovered guilt from its hiding-place,

and "make manifest the counsels of the hearts?" If so, we have all the securities which the uniformity of human motives will admit of, that by implanting in the popular mind the principles of "wisdom and knowledge," we have increased "the stability of our times;" we have "lengthened the cords, and strengthened the stakes" of those moral fences, which should confine men to the way of happiness, so that they may see the depth of the gulf before they leap into it, and be told their wages before they commit the sin; and though this knowledge may not necessitate right conduct, it increases the difficulty of following wrong, by giving them fresh convictions to stifle, and demanding of them more obstinate and stubborn blindness to the "path of pleasantness, and way of peace."

Still, again it is to be noted, that all these calculations of national happiness proceed upon the supposition, that the wisdom we impart is scriptural wisdom—Protestant wisdom—the unmixed, uncorrupted, un mutilated doctrines of the Word of God. Let a system be publicly countenanced and supported, which "teaches for doctrines the commandments of men," which makes the truth of Heaven "of none effect" by its wicked and unauthorised traditions, yea, which visits with curses the cottager who presumes to have a Bible in his hands, or mulcts the bookseller who should have the audacity to sell one from his counter; and from that moment that which the prophet calls "the stability of our times" is undermined and taken away. "Wisdom and knowledge" will have no foundation; light will become darkness, and darkness light, on a mere *flat* of fallible men; and religion, virtue, truth, morality, all which we had thought unchangeable as the throne of heaven, will be superseded on the caprice of Antichrist, or bartered away to fill the coffers of the Vatican.

II. But the advantages of a pure system of religious truth are to be seen in the principles of action, which Scripture lays down for our moral guidance.

We have already spoken of the natural conscience as harmonising with, if not suggesting, that judicial relation in which the Almighty attends to every intelligent spirit; but this is not the only instance, in which the language of Scripture and conscience are coincident. Does our ex-

perience teach us, that pleasure always connects itself with the exercise of our conscientious feelings, and that resistance to their authority inevitably produces pain? Scripture also assures us, that "gladness" is the portion of "the upright in heart," and that the "condemnation of our own hearts" is but the response of a more fearful condemnation still. Does a man feel, that conscience has a kind of directive office, urging him to preferences which human expediency would forego? Scripture sets its seal upon it, honours it with the designation of "the candle of the Lord," affirms its decisions, deprecates and censures its lost supremacy, and appeals to its uncorrupted verdict as having an authority coequal with its own, inasmuch that conscience of an offence makes an offence. To "doubt" condemns us; "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" and the sanction of all the saints of God would never supersede the firm persuasion of our own minds.

There is an obvious fitness in this feature of revelation, which, viewed merely as a system of ethics, commends itself strongly to our national approval. The complex relations of human life utterly forbid the framing a catalogue of duties, at once definite in its requirements, and universal in its application. With respect to either table, the nature of the case admits only of the announcement of certain principles, the genius and spirit and extent of which must be left to the interpretation of individual consciences. Take, for example, the duties of the first table. The Bible does not prescribe, because it could not prescribe, universally, how often a man should pray, nor how long a man should pray; but it tells him, that until his heart is in the work, he does not pray at all, and that when his heart is in the work, he will need no rules to determine how often he should repeat it, nor any heads to remind him that he hath prayed quite long enough. Again: when we are told, that in order to friendship with God, it is needful to come out from the world, and be separate from the world, we must not look to have this world defined by particular locality, or measured out in statute miles; but rather that it is left to each individual, by the aid of an enlightened conscience, to determine what constitutes the world to him: which is easily discovered, by his finding what society it is, what pursuit it is, what recreation it

is, which is gradually alienating his heart from God, indisposing him for all holy duties, converting his spiritual manna into wormwood, and causing the "reasonable service" of God to become a burdensome and galling yoke. It is thus, that the Bible gives to its various tests and touchstones almost as much precision and certainty, as that which in the elder dispensation marked out by a geographical boundary those who served God, and those who served Him not. A man can have no difficulty in determining whether his views of spiritual and eternal things begin and end in speculation, in talk, in Church-going; or whether they exert a conscious and pervasive influence upon all his plans of life. He can tell whether, if it were proposed to him to enter upon some new project to-morrow, he would pause to inquire, 'Will my soul fare better here? shall I be nearer to my Saviour here? will God's blessing be with me?'—or whether, on the other hand, his only inquiry would be, 'How far will self be advantaged by such a project, and gratification extended over a wider range?' And thus, without giving any specific directions, we have a plain principle given to us all, which will serve for the guidance of us all, namely, that "whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God."

The same rule also is observed in Scripture, with respect to duties of the second table. Man is essentially a social being, and so multiplied are the social relations and affinities of life, that we are necessarily dependent upon others for much of the happiness we enjoy. And yet, how utterly impossible would it be, to frame a code of directions securing that happiness, setting forth with a universally applicable distinctness the correlative claims of ruler and subject, master and servant, rich and poor, buyer and seller, parent and child! To how many forms of social injury might we be exposed, which no minuteness could provide for, and no comprehensiveness anticipate! But that which could never be accomplished by a thousand rules, Scripture effects by the enunciation of a single principle—a principle which would correct every disorder in the social machine, and which would resolve all our doubts—to be applied under all changing circumstances, knowing no exception either of time or place, and invested with the

authority of a paramount and universal law—saying to us, “As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.” Here, upon the broad basis of Christian brotherhood, upon the principle of our relationship to one common Father, as having one heritage to share, one feebleness to deplore, one hope to flee to, and one judgment to abide, are all mankind provided with a permanent and un-failing rule: a principle too, which so far from disturbing, marshals into greater order all the subordinations of human society; strengthening the arm of power, vindicating the claims of freedom; giving to masters a law of kindness, to servants a rule of love; hallowing parental sanctions, and inspiring filial trust.

Here again, however, it is to be observed, that all our expectations of national happiness, as proceeding from the inculcation of “wisdom and knowledge,” are based on the supposition, that our people are instructed to refer all these practical rules of life and conduct to the standard of pure, enlightened, Bible-taught conscience; that is, a conscience harmonising with and governed by the dictates of the written Word. Let us but once give in to that withering and soul-destroying system, whereby our consciences are to be taken out of our own keeping, whereby (and I use a literal translation of the words of the Cardinal Bellarmine,) the Church would be bound to believe that vices are good, and virtues evil, should the Pope command the one and forbid the other; yea, whereby a plenary indulgence is given to a man for all sin, and full relief promised to all the past burdens of conscience, provided only he be engaged in the destructive plans of the Holy See, and by fair means or foul rooting up all heretics from the face of the earth; and what can there remain for us to look forward to, under a system of patronised, endowed, State-protected falsehood?

No, brethren. be we well assured of this, that the frozen adder of Popery will not long enjoy the genial warmth of State nursing and State endowment, without speedily repaying the folly of its benefactor, by taking away the life-blood and souls of his children.

III. But further, we say that “wisdom and knowledge,” when conducted on

Protestant principles, will become a “stability to our times,” as raising up the best safeguard we can have, against the various moral dangers which surround us.

Although there may have been periods in the world's history, when error has arrayed itself in grosser forms, there probably was never one, in which it assumed so many and such diversified forms at one and the same time. Usually opinions, like fashions, incline men's minds a particular way, so that amidst a thousand modifications one is able to detect some master delusion, lording it over the spirits of men. At one time the tendency of error is to a bigotted superstition; bidding reason do homage to an unexamined faith; shackling the freedom of human thought, and sacrificing at the shrine of a weak credulity all that could adorn or dignify the man. At another time it inclines to an irreverent and daring scepticism; challenging truths clear as the light of heaven, and firm as the pillars which support its throne; men thinking to intrude into “the deep things of God,” and by the ladder of an unsanctified intellect to fetch down fire from the skies. At another time its tendency is to a reckless innovation on things as they are, and often for no better reason than *because* they are; dominions are despised, sacraments are degraded, dignities are evil spoken of, and the labours of holy men criticised with as much flippant dogmatism, as though our fathers employed no more time and thought in the compilation of our public formularies, than it is to be feared many of their children do in reading them, or their objectors in condemning them. But, strange to say, all these opposite and conflicting forms of error are now rife and rampant at the same moment; glossed over, indeed, with imposing titles, and sustained perhaps by a show of piety, but errors still, perilous errors, and errors from which nothing but a close adherence to the Word of God, and those formularies which we will not hesitate to call an embodied Bible, will ever be able to secure us.

Are there, then, so few forms of error in this our day, poisoning the public mind, that we must encourage that which our fathers shed their blood to suppress? Have we not still to encounter that leathsome system, which was spreading not long since among the humbler classes, and which under the pretence of “social

regeneration," is aiming to change men into beasts, and women into slaves; which, under the well-ordered mockery of free discussion, is Sabbath after Sabbath recurring afresh to the miserable buffoonery of Paine, and gathering up those spent and blunted arrows, which French infidelity once directed against the cause of truth? And are not our poor plied with various forms of religious imposture? Is there not a system, which will minister to their pride of intellect, and expatiate largely on the benefits of independent thought, making a virtue of casting off all established opinions, and renouncing all dependence on Divine instruction? And though we know there is little in the Socinian's creed to attract our living sympathies, and still less to soothe our dying pains—that there is a settled gloom about their later hours, which anticipates the darkness of an unvanquished grave—a chilliness which makes the blood freeze before its time—yet are we sure that we have so subdued this adversary, that we may recklessly encounter another before we have lost sight of this? Have we not another class of errors in our own Church, which seem to be but too near akin to Popery; appearing to offer strange violence to the current of public thought, by forcing it back again up the stream of time, and bidding men take up the lessons of their spiritual infancy, in exchange for the wisdom of their riper years?

Now from one and all of these errors we see but one preservative, namely, the general spread of the truth of God by means of a sound, scriptural, Protestant education. If we wish to keep our people from the shallow fords of a vain philosophy on the one hand, and from the muddy wells of a deceitful tradition on the other, we must take care to satisfy them early with water fresh drawn from the fountain of life. It is a known fact, that there is the most infidelity, where there is the least knowledge of the Bible. The most acute infidel that ever wrote against Christianity, acknowledged that he had never read the New Testament through. Lord Byron has left us the best testimony to his own ignorance and flippancy, in the assertion that in all the books of the Old Testament, there is not to be found an allusion to a future state. And Gibbon, after being brought up in that Bible-bating system fostered by mo-

dern expediency, ended with becoming the champion of infidelity.

Yes, my brethren, it is ignorance—ignorance of that which it concerns them most to know—that consigns individuals to eternal death, and States to a long dishonour. Had France taught her sons the Bible, she would not have been so long a prey to wild and wasteful anarchy. Had Spain taught her sons the Bible, she had seen the yoke fall off their priest-ridden neck, and her children rejoicing in "the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free." And in like manner, if we would arrest the progress of those threatening evils, which now fling their dark and giant shadows across our land, we must collect our weapons from the Divine treasury; we must stand up boldly for God's pure and unmutated Word; we must clothe our youth with "the whole armour of God," in order that they may resist steadfastly all the foes of truth, and "contend earnestly" for that "wisdom and knowledge," which "will be the stability of our times, and strength of salvation."

Brethren, they are not light considerations, on which I have ventured even thus incidentally to notice the political occurrences of the day. I have ever been persuaded, and, God being my helper, I will always act upon the persuasion, that the pulpit is a sacred place—sacred to the honour of God, sacred to truth and holiness, sacred to the interests of pure religion and virtue; but by the measures now contemplated in high places, I cannot but feel that all these holy interests are in danger—that a step is being taken, which must loosen the foundations of our common Protestantism, and a precedent established for making "pure and undefiled religion" a time-serving instrument to promote the fancied interests of the State.

Of motives I would impute none, save those of patriotism and uprightness; but would charitably believe, that all who originate or who support these measures, are urged on by the persuasion of an immediate and certain benefit. I only suggest to them, and to all whose uplifted voice may influence the final casting of the die, whether they do not overlook the unchangeable genius of Romanism, forget the facts of history, and take too little heed to the awful denunciations of the Most High against all who should add to

or take from the words of the Book of life, when they are seduced from the high grounds of principle to secure a contingent benefit, and thus in the words of the apostle "doing evil that good may come."

And now, brethren, I have discharged, not without some reluctance, that part of the solemn vow I took at my Ordination, to "be ready, with all faithful diligence, both by public and private monitions, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to God's Word." Further into the subject than I am required to go, both by my position and vow as a public instructor, I am unwilling to go. I would desire at all times to ascend this place, with the solemn thought that I "watch for souls;" and would therefore endeavour, so far as in me lies, to hush into holy stillness every turbulent and angry thought, and to fill the place of our solemn assemblies with that atmosphere of joy and peace, in which the eternal Spirit loves to dwell.

Whatever you may feel it a duty to do in swelling that voice, which like "the voice of many waters" is now lifted up against the proposed endowment of idolatrous and superstitious error, do it in the spirit of love, in the spirit of prayer, in the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind. If you are obliged to condemn systems, learn at the same time to speak kindly of men. Whatever is done for our Master's honour, must be done after our Master's example; and that example teaches us to love all for whom He died. And if among these any should be found, who are "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts," then are we taught to pray, that God would "take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of His blessed Word;" and that He would "so fetch them home to His flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israel, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord."

NATURE OF THE EDUCATION GIVEN AT THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE AT MAYNOOTH.

(From a Tract, issued by the Central Anti-Maynooth Committee, sitting at the London Coffee House.)

THIS information is drawn from sources supplied by Dr. Croft, who, in 1836, was President of Maynooth College, and, together with the Professors, made a return of the books used or referred to in the course of education there.* From these works we might cite passage after passage, in support of the gravest accusations of history against the Church of Rome.

We give a few extracts from a work on Canon Law, not the worst that might be selected. In *Reffinatus* (one of the *Standards of Maynooth College*) *Decretal tit. vii. De Hæreticis*, it is asked, "Are vassals, and servants, and others, freed from private obligation due to a heretic, and from keeping faith with him? *Answer*.—Yes. All are so by the clear disposal of the law."

Again, it is inferred also, 1.—"*That he who owes anything to a heretic by means of purchase, promise, exchange, pledge, deposits, loan, or any other contract, is ipso iure free from the obligation, and is not bound to keep his promise, bargain, or contract, or his pledged faith, even though sworn, to a heretic.*"

Then, on the subject of oaths, taken by lay officials, it is there stated, tit. xxiv. *De Jur. Jurando*, No. 81, that "a general oath of observing the statutes, capitulations, or customs of any Church or community, obliges only to observe things lawful, possible, and not prejudicial to the liberty of the Church. Such is the common opinion; and it is expressly decided in the first chapter, by declaring that those oaths which are accustomed to be taken by powers, rulers, and lay officials in the beginning of their office, and which sometimes contain things unlawful and prejudicial to ecclesiastical immunity, ought to be observed only as to those things that are lawful; since, as to other things, they cannot be observed without an offence against the Divine Majesty."

Again, in tit. vii. *De Hæreticis*, there is a compendium of the temporal and corporal punishments of heretics, and it is asked, what corporal punishments, especially of imprisonment and death, have been decreed against heretics?—to which it is replied:

"We answer, first, impenitent heretics, that is, who are unwilling to be converted, but obstinately persevering in their heresy, are to be put to death (*ultimo supplicio afflicti sunt*), whether they be clergy or lay, but so, that the heretical clergy, first be degraded, and afterwards delivered to the secular power to be punished with death."

Again, li. 313, on the subject of allegiance. "It is inferred that vassals and slaves are ipso facto, freed from their service and fidelity towards an heretical lord, as likewise male and female servants from obedience to the same," and in *lib. v. Decret. sec. vi. 311*, "For the doctors commonly infer that the Pope on account of this crime, can, for the sake of religion, absolve the laity from an oath of fidelity, and from any other obligation, though confirmed by an oath which they held beforehand to the delinquent; both as well, because, in every promise, 'the cause of religion' is considered excepted; as because, in such an obligation and oath it is tacitly understood, if he continues such a person with whom I may lawfully communicate, or if he does not render himself justly unfit and unworthy."

Such are the sentiments contained in a work on Canon Law, published at Rome, and that so recently as the years 1831, 2, 3, 4, and 5!!!

From the writings and commentaries of Delehogue, Menochius, Capasculus, used as *class-books*; and Bally, Collett, Van Roper, Davoti, Antonie, Cœrneus & Lapide, Maldonatus, St. Thomas Aquinas, as *standards at Maynooth*, sentiments equally, or more obnoxious and dangerous to the peace and well-being of society, might be quoted.

* See Appendix to the Eighth Report of Commissioners of Education, page 445.

† Those who wish to verify the above quotations, will find the work from which they are taken in the British Museum.

PROPOSED NATIONAL GRANT
TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE AT MAYNOOTH.

SPEECH

OF THE

REV. HUGH McNEILE, M.A.

DELIVERED AT A MEETING HELD AT THE LIVERPOOL AMPHITHEATRE,
ON MONDAY, APRIL 7, 1845.

Mr. Chairman.—There is, sir, a large number of people assembled in this place, whom I should be very sorry to disappoint, or in any way to grieve. There may be, and I think it very likely there are, a few persons here, whom I should be extremely glad to disappoint. Therefore, sir, conscious of my own infirmity, I have taken the liberty of writing a scriptural protest upon this subject, which, with your permission, I will read before I make a speech.

"We are assembled here to-day, not actuated by any desire to find fault with others, neither by any unwillingness that those who differ from us in opinion, should possess every advantage really conducive to their true and permanent happiness; but by a deep and solemn sense of our responsibility and duty. The question before us is a religious question. As such we have felt it; as such we have thought, and written, and spoken upon it. But, in the meaning commonly applied to the word *religious*, it is not an exclusively religious question. It may indeed be doubted, whether, in the present state of the world, any practical questions, entirely or exclusively religious, can arise among men. Man, consisting, as he does, of body as well as spirit, and the Christian dispensation consisting, as it does, of outward and visible ordinances, as well as inward and spiritual principles; the different branches of the subject cannot be so radically separated, as some persons think they may be and are. If the commandments of Almighty God were exclusively addressed to man's inward feelings, and conveyed by the unseen ministration of angels, independent of any human instrumentality, then religion might be wholly separated from the affairs of this world. But this is not the case. God's commandments are addressed to man's outward actions also, and are conveyed by human instrumentality, of Divine appointment; and thus a man's intercourse with God, and obedience to God's law, that is, his religion specially so called, is absolutely inseparable from much that belongs to his in-

tercourse with his fellow man. In every discussion therefore, involving such topics, the real question at issue is a mixed one. I do not allege that it is wholly comprised in our duty towards God, without any regard to the feelings, infirmities, or prejudices, the varying judgments and present interests of our fellow-men; neither, certainly, is it comprised in our duty, or supposed duty, towards our neighbour, without any regard to the plain revelation, and permanent authority, of Almighty God. Thus here, as elsewhere, the law has two tables, and the consistent Christian has two objects in view; first and chiefest, fidelity to Divine truth; and, second and subordinate, the present convenience and future improvement of human society.

"These observations apply, in all their force, to the subject now under our consideration. I am willing to admit, that, so far as the present convenience of human society is concerned, the weight of argument seems to be against us. I believe, indeed, that even on this ground,—a true and adequate view of the social character of the Roman Catholic system, would prove it an unsafe, and, therefore, impolitic course, to give it national encouragement. But, generally speaking, I am, I repeat, willing to admit, that if we had nothing to take into our consideration but fair play between man and man as such; if we had no revelation from God, and no special duty towards God and His revealed will; in that case we would all be liberal, as it is called: we would delight to be liberal; we should have no higher duty, no more constraining consideration, than how to please man. I do not wonder at persons who take this view, being enthusiasts on the side of liberality.—I mean persons who have no real, practical regard to God's authority, or who evade it by the plea that either God has given us no revelation of His will, or if He has, it is practically useless, since it is bigotted presumption in any man to pretend to understand its meaning. If I could exclude God's authority out of the question, I would join such persons—I

would join them cordially, with all the unchecked desire of my heart to cultivate and exercise kindness to all men. But if I believe the Holy Scriptures to be a revelation from Almighty God (the question really turns upon this); if I believe that the Bible contains directions of infinite wisdom concerning my highest duty, and announcements of infallible truth concerning my eternal happiness; then I cannot yield to the desires of my fallen heart, in defiance or neglect of what is written in the Bible.

"I cannot look upon my duty towards my neighbour, as my only or my highest duty; neither can I limit that duty to a regard, however sincere, for the temporal well-being of my neighbour. He possesses a soul as well as a body, and he has to live, not only in this world, but in the world to come. It must, I think, in fairness be admitted, that this makes an essential difference, and that what might be considered a sufficient discharge of my duty towards my neighbour, if he were only a social creature intended only for this world, is not, and cannot be considered, a sufficient discharge of that duty towards an immortal creature, an heir of eternity. Here, then, is the root of the reason, why we cannot join the system of liberalism. It is not that we love our fellow creatures less, but that we love and fear God more. By various arguments, amounting to moral demonstration the most convincing, we are satisfied that the Author of creation, is the Author of Christianity. Our whole mind, and soul, and strength, and moral and intellectual being, with all its powers, and all its capacities, is penetrated with a conviction of the truth of the Holy Scriptures; and that the things which are bound and loosed in the declarations of this Book, taken in the simplest and most natural meaning, will be bound and loosed in the unalterable decisions of the living God, at the bar of eternal judgment.

"We cannot, therefore, discuss such a subject as the one now before us, as it was discussed in the House of Commons on Thursday evening last, namely, without any serious reference to the Word or authority of God. We might as well, and quite as wisely, discuss an astronomical problem without reference to the centrifugal impetus, or the attraction of gravitation. We must refer to the revealed will and wisdom of God, and if those who have authority to act, will not condescend to accompany us in that reference, but proceed upon their own wisdom, and the precedent of their predecessors in office; we, who have no authority, can do no

more than respectfully and firmly witness our good confession, and then quietly and prayerfully abide the issue.

"We may, however, say, that in refusing to meet us on scriptural and Christian ground, they do in effect confess, that on that ground they cannot meet us. That sacred ground is ours. In the debate on Thursday evening, no speaker amongst our opponents on this question, dared to set a foot there. Not so much as an attempt was made, to show that the authority of the Almighty justified the step they were advocating. It will not do to say that such a topic would have been irrelevant, having no connection with the subject of debate. On the contrary, so intimately connected is religion with the subject, that the religious scruples of those who object to the proposed measure, were again and again referred to, and again and again thrown over, without any attempt at a scriptural answer. It was clearly known that the numerous petitions against the measure, which, by their simultaneous presentation, attracted the attention, and excited the merriment of the House, originated in the religious objections of many thousands of the people; still no answer. Surely we may truly say, that whatever political principles, and whatever temporal interests of the country may be represented, and fairly represented in the House of Commons, the religion of the country is not represented.

"The question before us cannot be discussed in its true merits, without direct and pointed reference to the Scriptures; because it involves principles, concerning which there is no true standard upon earth, except the Word of God. The moral government of God, in all its essential principles, is, like Himself, perfect, and therefore unchangeable. The outward circumstances of the administration of His government may vary in different ages and nations; but the essential principles on which the government itself is conducted, must be eternally the same. For example—punishment for transgressions is an essential principle of the Divine government. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." The period and the mode of inflicting that punishment are varying circumstances, not affecting the principle. In one instance it may please God, in infinite wisdom, to inflict the punishment immediately upon the transgression; in another instance, to delay the punishment for years. In one instance, to make the punishment visible in outward calamity; in another instance, to make it invisible in some secret dis-

treas. Is the case of one individual, to make the punishment to consist of temporal degradation and shame; in the case of another, to reserve the punishment through a long course of temporal prosperity, and then to inflict everlasting misery. No such variation as this, however, can take place in the case of nations as such; because no nation, as such, has any eternal existence, and therefore the punishment of a nation must consist of some temporal calamity. *And this is another principle of the Divine government, indispensable for the vindication of God's character as the providential ruler of this present world. *This is largely illustrated and corroborated by the facts recorded, and comments made, in Holy Scripture. In so referring to the Scriptures, we must not be excluded from the Old Testament history, by the common, but untenable objection, derived from an alleged essential difference between the Jewish and Christian dispensations.

"It is said, that the Jewish dispensation was one of visible temporal rewards and punishments, one of miraculous interference on the part of God when His kingdom was of this world, and therein so characteristically different from this, that no argument grounded upon a supposed analogy between them can be sound and conclusive: because in this dispensation no temporal advantage or prosperity is promised to the righteous, neither any temporal punishment to the wicked; the Lord's 'kingdom is not of this world,' and no miraculous interference on the part of God interrupts the natural course of events. Under the Jewish dispensation, it is alleged, there was no mystery in providence; and, therefore, God, as a manifest providential ruler, punished the wicked nations 'by national calamities'; but now the long-suffering of God has made providence a mystery, and there is no vindication in this world of the character of God, as a providential ruler. It is the decision of the day of judgment, that will vindicate His character. Is this true, and will it bear the test of Scripture? Or are the facts of the case such, that no such objection can fairly be made to our line of argument? If the Jewish dispensation were one of visible miraculous interference, so that there was no mystery in providence, whence the complaint of the psalmist—'As for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped; for I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.' 'They say, how doth God know? and is there

knowledge in the Most High? Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.' 'They spread abroad as a green bay tree.' 'They come in no trouble, like other men.' And whence the exhortation—'Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass?' Whence, also, that complaint of Solomon—'Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil?' These passages express, as characteristic of the Jewish dispensation, the same long-suffering forbearance in God, and the same mystery of providence in the prosperity of the wicked, which we recognise as characteristic of our own times. And, per contra, if this one dispensation be so wholly divested of temporal rewards and punishments, that the character of God as a providential ruler remains in every case necessarily involved in mystery until the day of judgment, whence that promise of our Saviour—'Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again?' And whence that exhortation of the apostle—'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour thy father and mother which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth?' And whence the language of the same apostle to his friend Timothy—'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come?' Here we have expressed, as belonging to this our dispensation, that visible temporal interference which we see was characteristic of the Jewish. What is the result? Why, that both dispensations have the same general characteristics. The Jewish is not divested of the mystery of God's long-suffering forbearance; the Christian is not divested of the miracle (as we speak) of God's visible interference. Concerning both we may say, in the language of St. Augustine—'If no sin were punished here, no Providence would be believed: if every sin were punished here, no judgment would be expected.' What I contend for here is, that there does not exist so wide a difference between the two dispensations, in their essential characteristics, as that any objection can be grounded thereupon against the pro-

priety of the parallel which we draw, or the force of the instruction which we thence derive.

"The dealings of Almighty God with the Jewish nation, compose what is commonly called sacred history: not that the events themselves are, in themselves, more sacred than others, for all events, in all nations, are equally under the immediate and sovereign management of God; but they are sacred to us above all others, because they are accompanied with inspired comments, pointing out the

by of the history. God Himself, by the ministry of His holy prophets, called the attention of the Jews, and now calls the attention of all men, to the moral of His dealings, to the doctrines contained in the narrative, to the principles, the everlasting, unchanging principles of truth, involved in the facts of the case. 'Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else!' The history of their fathers, the former things or events past, were worthy of their remembrance and careful consideration; because He who had overruled the history of their fathers, was overruling this history, and on the same principles. In the successive histories of the world, only the human instruments change. One generation of creatures follows after another; but the great Divine Agent changeth not, and the great principle of His government changeth not. He is eternally and essentially sovereign, and cannot for a moment be controlled; eternally and essentially perfect, and cannot for a moment alter. If controlled in anything, He ceases to be sovereign; if altered in anything, he ceases to be perfect—He ceases to be God. Remember what He has done; consider it, that you may understand what He is doing, and what He will do. He has stamped a red

certainty upon some of His purposes by prophecy. A revealed certainty! That is, a pledge of certainty communicated to His intelligent creatures. Essential certainty is in His mind and purpose, independent of and antecedent to all revelation. Revealed certainty is in His Word, declaring the end from the beginning,—not only knowing it Himself, but declaring it, that His creatures also, who can trust His word, may know it, and know that He knew it before—announcing from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.'

"It is in contrast with such views of the majesty of the living God, that the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures exhibits the madness of image worship. The idols of Ba-

ylon, the images of Bel and Nebo, are described as a burden for the weary beasts who dragged them on the carriages heavy laden. Instead of supporting their worshippers, they themselves required to be supported, and carried and set in their places, out of which they could not move. The power and majesty of the God of Israel are contrasted. 'By Him His worshippers had been supported from the first, and even to your old age,' He says, 'I am He, and even to hear haile I will carry you. I have made and I will bear; even I will carry and will deliver you.' Then the men of Israel are appealed to, exhorted to consider this, and show themselves possessed of reason. 'Remember this, and show yourselves men;' give proof that you are not stones or beasts of the field, or images, or automata, or lunatics, but that you are men. It is to men, to creatures of intelligence, capable of the exercise of reason, that God has addressed His law; and the high reason assigned therein against the use of images in worship, and against every species of idolatry, is that God is jealous. He is jealous of His own glory as the only appropriate object of worship; saying, 'I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images.' He will not suffer images or relics to share with Him the praise of effecting cures, or forgiving sins, or administering consolations among men. He is jealous of the happiness of His creatures, which cannot be promoted by cultivating such false dependences, as must terminate in disappointment. It does not meet the full demands of His holy jealousy that His creatures worship Him; they must worship none other but Him. There is not only a propriety, but also an exclusiveness about His claim, which admits of no participation with another. This may be illustrated from human things, both by contrast and comparison. By contrast, it differs essentially from the social friendships and ordinary businesses of men. You may make a second friend, without any injury or offence to the first. You may transact business with a third, fourth, or fifth neighbour, without any unkindness or injustice towards the first or second. Nay, in these, and such matters as these, participation is right, for 'we are members one of another,' but in the relationship which each of us bears to God, there is an absolute and indivisible exclusiveness. By comparison, also, some of our human relationships seem to illustrate the subject. Especially there are two, which aid us in apprehending aright the exclusiveness of God's claim upon our affection

and service. These are loyalty and conjugal fidelity. A truly loyal subject cannot, in any degree, or under any pretence whatever, divide his allegiance. He cannot feel or act towards any other sovereign, as he does towards his own. Here, participation in the slightest measure is disloyalty; because the sovereign's claim upon him is not only right in itself, but also exclusive of all others. In like manner, a faithful and true wife cannot, in any degree, or under any pretence whatever, divide her affection or her attention. She cannot feel or act towards any other as she does towards her own husband. Here, participation in the slightest measure is infidelity; because the husband's claim is not only right, but exclusive. God spake these words, and said—'I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make to thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands in them that love Me and keep My commandments.' In our division of the commandments of God, these words comprise two, the first and second. In the division made in the Roman Catholic Catechisms and Prayer Books, what we call the second commandment, is treated as an explanation of the first, and under the plea that it is enough to give the commandment itself, without its explanation. But whatever may be done in catechisms of man's compiling, these words were spoken by the living God, and are found in His holy law in the Bible—in our Bible, &c. in their Bible. In the Douay Bible they are thus translated:—

'Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them. I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.'

"Look now into the glass of this holy law of God. The human heart is like the human eye; while busy upon objects all around, it cannot see itself without a glass. God sees and knows it in its inmost winding, and He has set before us the faithful glass of His holy law, that we

may know ourselves. Every prohibition of God's law is addressed to some propensity of man's heart. God says, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.' Here we learn, that a propensity of man's heart is to multiply objects of worship. The original of the passage is remarkable: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before My face.' The English word *before* is used in three different senses; with reference to time, it signifies *prior to*; with reference to dignity, it signifies *in preference to or above*; with reference to place, it signifies *in presence of*. The last is the meaning here. Thou shalt have no other objects of worship in Jehovah's presence. And if not in His presence, then where can we have them? Let Jeremiah answer—'Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.' Again God says—as a distinct commandment, in our views; as an explanation of the fact, say the Romanists—but in either case it remains true, that God says, 'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image.' Here we learn, that a propensity of the human heart is, to have recourse to visible objects of worship; to attempt to affect the mind through the eye-sight. Had this been suitable; had it been conducive to true devotion; had it been profitable to men, and acceptable to God; would these words have been spoken from Mount Sinai? If the use of visible objects in divine worship, as images, pictures, relics, crucifixes, beads, scapulars, *agates Dei*, had been not only allowable, but commendable, is it reasonable to suppose, is it likely, is it possible, that God would have used such words, as seem so plainly to forbid them altogether? This argument is made stronger still, by a fact recorded in Scripture, compared with the inspired comments upon it.

'All the people brake off their golden earrings that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron, and he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving-tool, after he had made it a molten calf; and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow is a feast to the Lord. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.'

"In this case, what was the object of their worship? Taking worship in its highest sense, and ultimate design, and desire of the human mind, clearly the object of the worship was the Lord God of Israel, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. It was to Him, even to Jehovah, that Aaron proclaimed a

feast. If any man in the camp had accused them of worshipping the calf, they would doubtless have denied it with indignation, and said, 'No! we only use the calf as a help to our senses, we do not worship it; it is a wilful calumny against us, to assert such a thing. Did not our respected high priest proclaim a feast to Jehovah? The true God is the object of our worship, and why, then, accuse us of worshipping an image?' Hear now what God himself said to it. 'The Lord said to Moses, Go, get down again, for thy people have corrupted themselves; they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made a molten calf, and have worshipped it.' Hear also how the apostle Paul commented on this occurrence in the history of Israel, and held it out as a warning to the Christian Church against idolatry. 'Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.' The Israelites, on the occasion referred to, were keeping a feast to Jehovah, the God of their fathers. They were singing His praises for their deliverance by His power out of the bondage in which they had been so long enslaved. All this was good; and yet this very incident in their history is selected by the apostle, as supplying a warning against idolatry. And why? Because in their worship they made use of an image.

"The question recurs, is God's Word to be practically supreme or not? And this is really the question at issue. For although some parts of the Bible may be obscure, and some parts so expressed as to be capable of various interpretations; yet the great and characteristic matters of difference between Christianity and Romanism are so clear and distinct, that to deny this distinctness is to make the Bible practically useless—useless as an authority against any crime whatever. For if it be not plain against bowing down to graven images, *e. g.*, it is not plain against theft or adultery. And if it be plain against theft and adultery, so that he who commits such things offends Almighty God and incurs His righteous anger; then it is equally plain against bowing down to graven images, as an offence incurring the anger of the Almighty. We believe it plain and decisive against all these; simply and explicitly so, in the shortest and most unequivocal form of speech which a moral governor could address to reasonable and responsible crea-

tures. 'Thou shalt not steal,' 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' 'Thou shalt not bow down to them.' And as we could not (without wilful rebellion against God's authority) approve of or co-operate in, the endowment of a College for instruction in theft or adultery, so neither can we approve of, or co-operate in, the endowment of a college for instruction in bowing down to images.

"If Ireland contained six or seven millions of people devotedly attached to their priesthood; and if their priesthood avowed (and glorified in it as a part of their ancestral faith) that one part of their education consisted in learning to steal, and that one part of their official duty consisted in teaching the congregations composing the millions how to steal: and if application were made to the British Government to conciliate the people by contributing to the education of their priesthood; would such application be complied with? It will be answered, no. But I must take the liberty of asking, 'why not?' The people are sincere in their attachment to and veneration for their priests; the priests are sincere in their convictions of the truth and propriety of their early education handed down from their forefathers; and it is highly intolerant in you to pronounce them wrong, and on the presumption of knowing better than they do, to refuse to deal out to them equal justice in the matter of temporal support.' If it be answered, 'the cases are not parallel, because theft is an injury to their fellow subjects, and it is the part of good Government to prevent such injury; but bowing down to graven images is only an offence to God, and Government has nothing to do with God'—this concedes what I contend for. It proclaims its own ungodliness. It refuses to sanction and support the teaching of theft, not because God has forbidden it, but only because it is injurious to society. Now, our high reason for opposing the national adoption and endowment of Romanism is grounded on the Word of God; and the question now in rapid progress of decision in England is, shall the Word of God retain real practical authority in the land, or shall it not? It is thus that as Christians we show good and scriptural reasons for our own conduct in direct obedience to the Word of our God.

But as I have already said, the subject is a mixed one; and I now proceed to show cause for opposing the proposed measure, even on the ground of the good of society. And here you will perceive that it was not

at random or without an aim, that I selected theft for the illustration just offered: because, in point of fact, theft is a part of the instruction given in the College of Maynooth, theft on a small scale indeed, but still theft, and making up in number what it wants in weight. I am well aware, that this will be loudly and vehemently, but withal either ignorantly or falsely denied; and I most freely grant that it is a charge so solemn and so fearful, that to advance it without being able to prove it, would be absolutely unpardonable. I proceed to prove it. But first let me ask, what would and ought to be considered a proof of it? Suppose a commission of education to issue from our Parliament, and to proceed to Cambridge to institute an inquiry. The Commissioners ask the Master of Trinity College to say what are the class books, which it is imperative on the students to read. He gives the list, including, among others, Locke on the Human Understanding, and Paley's Evidences of the Christian Religion. Would this be proof that the principles taught in those books of Locke and Paley formed a part of the education in Trinity College, Cambridge? Surely it would, and the authorities of that College could not deny, that they were responsible for teaching, and might most justly and truly be accused of teaching any thing and every thing inculcated in those books. It is a matter of fact then, that the parliamentary commissioners of education went to the College of Maynooth, and made inquiry concerning the class books which it is imperative on the students to read. The list was given by the president, Dr. Crotty, including, among others, Dr. Delahogue's Treatise on Dogmatic Theology, and the Rev. Louis Bailly on Moral Theology. Is this a proof that the principles taught in the books of Delahogue and Bailly form a part of the education given in Maynooth College? Surely it is; and the authorities of that College cannot deny that they are responsible for teaching, and may most justly and truly be accused of teaching, anything and everything inculcated in these books. I open the books, and some measure of quotation is obviously necessary for my proof. But here I must entreat your seriousness, because on former occasions I have witnessed with much regret that the grossness of the immorality exhibited in such quotations, instead of producing a shudder in solemn silence, has led to very unseemly, because unseasonable, laughter and applause. My dearsir,

and my dear friends, let us seek to be so impressed with the dreadful and dangerous character of such teaching, as to be incapable of lightness or levity or merriment, during its painful but indispensable exposure.—[The reverend gentleman here read several extracts, clearly establishing his statements.]

"Let husbands and masters, let the whole Christian community, especially let our legislators, in their high responsibilities, ponder seriously on this mode of dealing with God's most holy law. Is it not palliation of, nay, actual instruction in, theft, provided only the amount be small? And is not this in direct and flagrant violation of the word and wisdom of Him who knew what was in man, and said—'He that is unjust in a little, is unjust also in much, and he that is faithful in a little, is faithful also in much.' Christianity estimates dishonesty by the principle, not the quantity, and forbids the theft of a penny, as imperatively as the theft of a pound, or a thousand pounds. Romanism estimates dishonesty by the quantity, not the principle; and while she denounces the theft of a pound, on account of the injury done to man, she palliates as venial—nay, almost defends and justifies, the theft of the penny, although it is palpable disobedience to God, and although it tends to blunt in the man the fine edge of a sense of right and wrong.

"I might call attention to their mode of treating the seventh commandment as well as the eighth; but delicacy forbids in such an assembly as this. But I must say, that to my mind, the most extraordinary, the most unaccountable moral phenomenon in the history of our fallen world, is the fact that men and gentlemen, fathers, and husbands, consent and actually co-operate to expose their daughters and their wives to the questionings of the confessional, when they may read the instructions given to their priesthood preparatory to those questionings, and see the particulars—many of them suggestive of indecency—in which those men are systematically taught to examine their penitents, especially recently married females."

And this, sir, is the seminary, for the endowment of which from the public treasury of England the prime minister of the country has introduced a Bill into the House of Commons. He introduced that Bill in a speech of great clearness and under systematic arrangement. He said, "It has appeared to us that we are at liberty to pursue one or other of three

courses with respect to the institution of Maynooth. It is competent for us to continue without alteration the present system, and the present amount of the parliamentary grant. That is one course." "It is competent," he proceeded, "for us to discontinue the vote altogether; to repudiate all connection with Maynooth." That was another course; and I am extremely glad to find the right hon. baronet declare that the House were at liberty, had they thought it right, to adopt any one of these courses. I take him at his word. Either of them is a repudiation of all notion of a compact. The third course was, "to adopt in a friendly and liberal spirit the institution provided for the education of the Roman Catholic priesthood." He discussed these three, *seriatim*. In discussing the first he showed, unanswerably, I think, the impropriety of continuing the present grant; he argued unanswerably, in my opinion, that as regards principle, it is as much violated by the grant of £9,000, as it will be by a larger grant, because principle is not a matter of amount. This part of his argument, although strong to those who would advocate the present grant, and reject any increase in it, has no strength with those who altogether repudiate any grant whatever. The right hon. baronet urged, however, the impropriety of refusing to add to the grant by a very striking exhibition of Maynooth statistics, in which he brought the subject before the House *in forma pauperis*. He described how wretchedly they were lodged, many of them occupying the same room, and many the same bed, and so he entreated for more money.

It is, however, upon the second branch of his speech, that the most important part of his subject was brought forward; and it is on this I wish to offer a few observations. "I come now," he said, "to the consideration of the second alternative. Shall we avow that our conscientious scruples are so violated in the maintenance of this system, that we will discontinue the connection with Maynooth; that the vote shall, after some temporary arrangements, be discontinued, and the burden of educating the priesthood shall be thrown upon the people of Ireland?" And to persuade the House to reject this alternative, he proposed, as the commencement of his argument, three questions. "When did your connection with it arise? Under whose authority? And how long has it been continued?" The right hon. baronet then shows that it arose

in the time of Mr. Pitt's ministry, in the reign of George the Third, when the Duke of Portland was Secretary of State for the Home Department, and Lord Fitzwilliam Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. No higher than these high names does the right hon. baronet go to justify the continuance of the connection with Maynooth! I hope that the people of England will require some higher argument than this to justify its continuance. These are highly respected names; but the subject involves a higher principle, as I have already shown; and when the right hon. baronet divided the subject into these three heads, inviting under the second, especial attention to conscientious scruples with regard to this connection with Maynooth, I certainly did expect to find something like an effort to show that religious scruples did not stand in the way. But there was no attempt to show this. The fact that Mr. Pitt, persuaded George the Third to it, the fact that George the Third reluctantly consented—the fact that Lord Fitzwilliam commended it to the attention of the Irish Parliament as best he could—these facts have nothing to do with the principle of the measure. They are historical facts, but they do not touch the point of conscientious scruples. The argument propounded by the right hon. baronet was that of conscientious scruples; the argument advanced and defended goes no higher than Mr. Pitt and George the Third.

Our consciences are not in allegiance to Mr. Pitt and George the Third. We should be compelled, indeed, to take such names for our authority if we had no higher authority. If we had no Bible, no law of God, I do not know how we could go higher than George the Third and Mr. Pitt; and what I complain of is, that the right hon. baronet did not go higher. I do complain that after formally introducing conscientious scruples before the nation, the right hon. baronet made no allusion to the Word of God. I do not think the omission can be justified by the plea that Parliament is no place for introducing religious subjects; conscientious scruples are introduced, yet they are dealt with without any appeal whatever to the foundations of religion as held by the British people. Advancing in his argument, and showing the inconvenience which must inevitably be incurred if the grant be withheld, he asks, "what a lesson shall we teach to the landlords of Ireland. We shall be teaching them not to grant any land for the erection of Roman Catholic Chapels;" and he referred to the city companies also who hold estates in Ireland, and who have given land for Roman Catholic Chapels. "In what position should we be with respect to Roman Catholic chaplains, to prisons and workhouses in Ireland, and in the colonies?" So the right hon. baronet traces all the steps that have been taken in that direction; and upon the strength of these pleas he calls on Parliament to take another; yet the heading of the speech, under which all this is given, invites us to consider conscientious scruples to the grant! If there existed conscientious scruples, they exist still. If the question be retorted upon me, and others who think as I do, and we be asked as practical men what should be done under such circumstances, I think

the answer to that is a reference, in the first place, to what should have been done. Were we mistaken when we thought that the mission of England was to extend over the world a pure and reformed Church? Were we mistaken when we thought that England, blessed with a reformed religion, and, in the providence of God, made the mistress of so many colonies, should have made an effort to introduce that religion among all the people over whom she acquired influence in other ways? England, it appears, had not confidence in her own creed; and instead of saying, as I humbly think she ought to have said in all her colonies, "we will not molest you in your opinions, whatever they are, but will not teach you any except those we think true; but if we respect your conscience, and refuse to enforce upon you opinions you disapprove of, we ask you to respect our conscience, and not request us to endow opinions of which we disapprove;" are the people in every colony to have their conscience and their religion respected, and England not to have the same? Is England to present to the aggregate of her colonies an exhibition upon a large scale, similar to what was thrown in the teeth of an hon. member by the late Mr. Wilberforce, in debate upon this very subject of Maynooth? A noble lord on the opposition side of the house, made what is called a "liberal" speech: Mr. Wilberforce got up and said he was one of those who believed the New Testament, and he had no ambition to be an honorary member of all religions. Then if it would have been right in the first instance for England to have refused to teach anything but what she believes true, surely it is right now that England should cease to teach anything but what she thinks true.

no con-
fession;
—, how-
ever helpless, to learn of us against his conscience. But, sir, while we utterly repudiate the notion of propagating truth by the sword, we equally repudiate the notion of perpetuating falsehood by the treasury. This is our answer then. Why should the British government give good British money to pay for instruction in what England, as a nation, has declared to be false? Why, as has been already argued, should England expose herself to the inconsistency, at this moment, of inviting me, and such as me, to make a declaration concerning certain doctrines, that they contain "idolatry to be abhorred of all true Christians," and then give £26,000, or £9,000, or £1,000, or even one penny of your money, to instruct the people in those very doctrines? Should she not rather say, "I have a conscience as you have; I respect yours—I ask you to respect mine. You shall not teach me contrary to mine—I will not ask you to learn contrary to yours. Learn as you will, instruct yourself as you will, interpret the Scriptures as you will, add tradition to them if you will, have what teachers you please but do not—in the name of common sense—in the name of fair dealing—in the name of God, who has given me a conscience, do not ask me to teach what I believe to be wrong and false; what I have told my people at home, is false; what my queen, upon her throne, has declared to be false; do not, I say, ask me to teach this." Notwithstanding, sir, that this high argument—the highest of all arguments—is clearly upon our side, notwithstanding that the sacred ground of the Word of God is left entirely in our possession; notwithstanding that the appeal made to it, which I myself took the opportunity of making, in order that it might be treated simply and quietly forward, to see whether it would be grappled with; notwithstanding that, that appeal has had no answer. No liberal paper in the kingdom, even under the irre-

sponsible "we" of editorship, has attempted to grapple with these arguments. Dead silence is reigning all around upon the Word of God; therefore, they leave us undisputed possession of the Word of God. Yet they are going on in the business just as if there was no God. And they will go on with the business too, except there be such an expression of opinion throughout the country, as shall make our members of Parliament feel there is a religion in the kingdom as well as a tariff. I scarcely know how to give practical instructions to our friends, as to the mode in which they should manifest their feeling in this matter. Of their enthusiasm to-day, no doubt there will be a faithful report somewhere; but I am quite prepared for a counter-report—representing this as a very insignificant affair. There are persons in the very highly responsible condition of editors of newspapers, who spread intelligence abroad through the country; but while we freely concede to them the right to choose their politics, and their purpose, and to defend their cause by the best of their arguments, we cannot concede to them the right of printing what they know to be wilful falsehood. We cannot, for example, concede to a editor in the land, whether whig or radical, whatever else he may be, or what or his may be, the right to misrepresent us. However may differ from our opinions—they are fair game him—let him respect those opinions, and at them if he can; but we cannot concede to him right of printing and circulating, that this small insignificant hole and corner meeting, "the place was not half filled, and that two of the parties present were respectable men. And yet it would not, in the slightest degree, have been a grievance, if it might have been, to see such a palpable mis-statement printed and circulated through the wide country. Therefore, there must be some other mode of expressing our judgment than this meeting.

I hope the manifestation of feeling that is going on in the country and in this town, will not be disregarded. But if it be, we can only come to this conclusion, that the mission of England was mistaken—that the national protest is no longer to be maintained—that the support of a reformed Church is not a part of the Divine purpose. And I believe, that if this crisis should so pass, and our connexion with the Roman Catholic religion shall be so consummated, and followed up, as no doubt it will be, by the endowment of the priesthood—for every argument that is good for going this one step will be good for another step—I believe it will then come to be the duty of Englishmen—of English Christians—to retire within their private spheres, to gather a remnant unto the Lord, a remnant according to His grace, out of this guilty nation, and that the notion of keeping the nation in an attitude of protest for truth must then be given up. And then what shall avail all her other glory? What then will avail her advance in science, her increase in commerce, her manufactures, her rail-roads, with all the other seeming incidents and effects which swell the accumulations of men now? They are burning incense to the glory of the nation. The nation has might—has power—has wisdom—but men are transferring the language which belongs to God, to an idolatrous nation. What, if all the while they are really and practically forgetting the authority of God, shall all their glories be but garlands, ornamenting the victim? Alas! for the gay machine; it is moving to the sacrifice; its pomp, its glory, and its splendour, and they that rejoice in it shall fall, and "God alone shall be exalted in that day."

PROPOSED NATIONAL GRANT
TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE AT MAYNOOTH.

SPEECH

OF THE

REV. HUGH M'NEILE, M.A.

AT A MEETING OF THE LIVERPOOL PROTESTANT OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION,
HELD AT THE MUSIC HALL, ON MONDAY, APRIL 14, 1845.

We had hoped that her Majesty's present ministers—deeply indebted, as they are, to Protestant influence, and professing, as they did, considerable sympathy with the Protestants of this empire—would themselves have been the defenders of our Protestant institutions, and of those great principles on which those institutions are based—principles, let me add, upon the strength and integrity of which the reigning family in this realm hold the sceptre, which is strictly and legally limited to a Protestant succession. Had her Majesty's ministers done so, as might fairly have been expected from the responsible advisers of a Protestant sovereign—who continues to be a Sovereign only while she continues to be a Protestant—such associations as this would not have been required, because then Protestantism would have been defended at its legitimate source. But the state of things is far otherwise; and therefore we are thrown upon the painful, but indispensable duty, of self-defence. Protestantism is now in peril in the land, because of the defection of the rulers of the land. I say we are driven to the painful, but indispensable duty of self-defence in this matter; and it is upon this ground that I anticipate benefit from such associations as the present.

Our constitutional power is indeed but small, being limited to the elective franchise and the right of petition. Petitions, even in overwhelming numbers, and from an acknowledged majority of the country, are disregarded by a majority of the House of Commons. It is therefore, high time for us to try, whether, by a judicious use of the elective franchise, we cannot manage to cause the majority in the House to be on the same side with the majority in the country. It is obvious, that by a weapon so rarely used as the elective franchise, nothing can be accomplished except through ex-

tensive combination. Under ordinary circumstances, such an amount of combination is scarcely to be expected; but we have seen, within the last few days, the Protestant feeling of the country exhibit such a spontaneous and simultaneous movement, with such might, with such energy and fervour, that we have good reason to hope, if the measure against which that manifestation has taken place—the proposed national adoption and endorsement of Roman Catholic doctrines—is not withdrawn—if that, I say, should not take place, we have reason to hope that the combination in question will rise to such an amount, and use the elective franchise with such efficiency, as to show we have still a constitutional representative government, and not a tyrant oligarchy. It is in this connexion that Protestant Associations, and Protestant Operative Associations, may be of invaluable use; and I am happy to tell you that many are in process of formation at this time, in different parts of the country.

Is the time indeed then come for a revival of Protestant zeal—zeal on behalf of scriptural truth, really believed and enjoyed? If so, then most assuredly, as a consequence, the time is come for a revival of Protestant conquest. Why, with reason and Scripture on her side, has not Protestantism been triumphant? The reason is, because she has not been zealous. With some few noble exceptions, she has not been zealous. It is zeal that moves men. The right fervour of Protestantism is religious zeal—call it enthusiasm, if you will. There must be passion, or men will not be moved. Men, after all, are much more moved by their affections and their passions, than by their reason; and no form of religion, however sound in reason, will operate upon the mass of men, if it be divested of passion. Protestantism, relying upon the intrinsic merit of the truth itself, has

not used, with the necessary fervour and energy, the means needful for propagating the truth among men; she has not made use of the enthusiasm of the heart. The right passion of Protestantism is religious zeal. While she was zealous, she was triumphant. I appeal to history on this point. While Protestantism was really zealous, while she believed what she said, and said it as if she believed it, she was triumphant. Luther touched the spring, and reformed Christianity started forth like a giant. But all her conquests were made at once. It is a most remarkable fact, she accomplished all that ever she accomplished in the way of conquest, in the very age after Luther lived. All her conquests were made while fervour—the fervour of religious passion was in her heart; and when she cooled into prudence, from that day to now she has scarcely held her own. Our own Church—our own English Church—has never understood fully, how to use the enthusiasm of her sons. Instead of acting upon that deeper philosophy of the human heart, which calculates upon the effect produced by passion among men, and thereupon directing and guiding the fervour of even untutored zeal in her service, how has she treated it? Alas! she has gravely frowned upon it; and, with cold, calm dignity, she has excommunicated it. Instead of directing the warm current into some skilfully constructed channel, in which it would have given an impulse to genuine orthodoxy, she has been content to allow her orthodoxy to be quiescent; she has dammed up the current, until, rising in its might, it has burst from her authority, and made a schismatic channel for itself; not because schism was preferred, but because action was morally inevitable, and the Church had constructed no arena for that action. Alas! for the consequences! Why, oh! why, should the Church of England have expected that the ardent spirits of all her sons should be cut down to the Procrustes' bed of her mild, calm, classical, and gentleman-like prudence? Why, I ask, should an edict of outward uniformity, adhered to as strictly as if it were an essential doctrine of the Gospel, have thrown into Dissent thousands of warm-hearted, noble, generous men, who, if they had been wisely and generously treated, would have been the strength instead of the weakness

of the Church? We have reaped, we are reaping, but we have not yet reaped the fulness of the harvest—the bitter harvest—which was naturally to be expected from that unwise and unphilosophical, and—I scruple not to say it—that most injudicious Act of Uniformity. And now the vast varieties of opinions occasioned by that act are cast in our teeth, as a reason why the Church of England should not be attended to, and should not be defended.

But, taking matters as they are—looking at the circumstances of the case as we find them—let us do our duty. Let us witness our good confession. Let us avail ourselves of our constitutional privileges, and discharge wisely and seriously the responsibilities connected with them. I wish to propose a plan to you—a mode of operation by which your duty in this matter (especially as many of you are electors in this borough) may be rendered efficient. It is a plan which may be profitably followed as an example in other places. But, before I do so, I wish to call your attention to what took place in the House of Commons last Friday night.—[The Rev. Gentleman first referred at some length to the speech of Mr. Roebuck, and next to that of Mr. Gladstone.] I wish, (he said, in continuation,) to speak of that right hon. gentleman with much respect. I have nothing to observe concerning him that is not cordially and sincerely respectful; and with reference to him politically, I scarcely know what to say, because I do not know where to find him. When this measure of endowing Maynooth was first suggested as a Cabinet measure, this gentleman proclaimed to the country that, rather than go along with it, he must give up his seat in the Cabinet. He retired from that honourable position, and thus gave one of the highest pledges that a man could give of his sincerity. He retired avowing his conscientious objections to this measure. On Friday night the second reading of the Bill was proposed, and early in the debate the right hon. gentleman stood up. I protest when I came to that part of the paper, and saw the name of the speaker, I anticipated a clear, conclusive, and eloquent proof of the strong grounds—the conscientious grounds—which he had taken for leaving the Ministry and for opposing this measure. What, then, was my astonishment, what was the marvel with

which I found the right hon. gentleman declaring that, although a majority of the people of England and Scotland were plainly against it, and although his own predilections had been against it, he came to give it "a deliberate and anxious support!" Well, I then anticipated that some very solid reasons would be assigned for the change. I did anticipate that his acute and cultivated mind, stored as it is with historical and theological knowledge, would have set before the country some such reasons as, having been sufficient for him, would prove sufficient for the thousands and tens of thousands of conscientious men like him. I trembled lest I should become a convert before I had finished his speech! But, alas! I found absolutely no reason assigned, in my judgment, worth the trouble of printing. I will mention some of them. The first and chiefest was the expectation that by this measure a better description—a more learned description of priests would be obtained from Maynooth. He says—"Undoubtedly you would have more learned professors, not only in proportion as the salary is larger, but in proportion as you can induce those who occupy the chairs to continue in them long. This measure would promote something like a learned body within that College, and I cannot entertain a doubt that in that respect it will exercise a softening and civilizing influence on the College, and on Ireland through its medium." I am quite aware that this anticipation of an improved class of priests is a prevailing one in many men's minds, inducing them to give their consent to this measure. But I am unable to see how the measure takes any security that this consequence shall follow. It is proposed that a large increase of money should be at the disposal of the body corporate of the College; and the bill announces the number of students upon whom that increased money shall be bestowed, and the proportion with which it shall be paid to them. Therefore it may be argued with apparent conclusiveness, that if the number be limited while the money is increased, there will be a larger amount to be expended upon the education of each; so that, instead of adding to the number of ill-educated men, you will add to the amount of education upon a given number. But I turn to the Bill itself; and I find that the 6th clause clearly specifies that

the sums (to be granted) "shall be paid and payable to the body politic or corporate." The number of students is specified, but the money is not to be given to them. If the Bill said that so much was to be given to each student, then the students above the given number would have no money to receive; but the money is to go to the corporate body, for the students; and suppose instead of 500 students they should receive 1,000, there is no penalty. We know already, by the Emancipation Act what words are good for without penalties. There is absolutely no protection in the Bill against their taking 1,000 students into Maynooth, or instead of expending the additional funds upon the better education of a given number, availing themselves of those additional funds to give the same sort of education as at present to an increased number. They would then have an increased staff for propagating their faith in this country, so that actually the English people would be paying money to increase the number of paid emissaries who would come over from Ireland to propagate Romanism in England. But suppose that the consequence I have ventured to anticipate should not follow—suppose they *bona fide* expend those additional funds upon the improved education of the priesthood; does it follow that because the man is better educated, there is an amelioration of his Romanism? Does secular education remove superstition from the mind and terror from the heart?

It is said here, that the change in their character would "exercise a softening and civilizing influence on the College." No doubt there is a great difference between a single, unpolished, uncouth student, turned out fresh from Maynooth, who has never been from his own country, and who, though he has learned to read a little Latin, has never got rid of the brogue, and the smooth, classical, highly-educated Jesuit, who has mixed in various societies, and who knows how to adjust his manner as well as his language to the various companies in which he finds access. There is a roughness about the one, and a "softness" about the other. I grant that measure of change; but is it an improvement in society? Whether would you have an open or a concealed rogue? Which would be the most dangerous, the man who came into the room avowing hostility to all, or the man who

came in pretending to be a friend, and yet with the softest and most gentleman-like address picking our pockets? The softening and humanizing influence of education may change a highwayman into a pickpocket, but it cannot change the natural man into the Christian; it may endanger society, but it can never be a safeguard to the State.

There was another argument upon which the right hon. gentleman laid much stress; it was this—that there are parties opposing the grant, who are not agreed upon the principles on which they oppose it. Some oppose it upon one ground, some upon another; some oppose it, because they are opposed to all endowments for religion; others are not opposed to all endowments, but only to this. And then the right hon. gentleman exclaims, "What unity, what consistency, what permanency can I hope from the proceedings of an opposition which combines those who object to support being given to religion by the State, with those who are at the opposite end of the Pole, and hold opinions diametrically the contrary?" So far as this is a good argument at all, it is an argument with two edges; and I would ask the right hon. gentleman, if I had the opportunity, with the utmost civility, "What unity, and what consistency, and what permanency can you expect from the supporters of a Bill who avow such opposite principles in its support? For example, the noble lord

is of his principles for its support, that is more than a restitution of property taken from the Roman Catholics, and now to be returned to them. The right hon. gentleman, referring to this speech, said, "There is one argument which was used in reference to this subject I must at least emphatically disclaim. It has been said that the funds we are now to vote for the College of Maynooth ought to be viewed as a sort of 'restitution' to the Roman Catholics of Ireland. I disclaim it in every point of view." Then again, I say, "What unity, what consistency, what permanency" can I hope from the proceedings of the friends of a measure who support it because it is restitution, and who support it because it is not restitution?

The other argument used by the right hon. gentleman in commendation of the Bill, which, I confess, operates upon my mind exactly in the opposite direction, he says, "This measure is a very great boon. I do not mean because of the thousands per annum, or the imposing sum it gives, but because there is no religious endowment held by the Church, as established in this country, which is held upon such easy terms." The terms are easy indeed. There is no condition whatever. The money is granted without being accompanied by any condition that could detract from the grace of it. There is to be no inspection of what they do with it—no report; and no interference in the slightest degree with the doctrines or discipline of the College. This the right honourable gentleman calls "a boon." But I ask, is it according to the constitution of this country that public money should be paid irresponsibly, and no account given? Are not the accounts to be audited? I think, therefore, this is a most legitimate ground

upon which any Englishmen would object to the grant.

Finally, the right hon. gentleman asks, "Is there any ground on which the opponents of this Bill can permanently and securely stand? I answer, yes!" The ground of God's most sacred Word—the law of England, by which the sceptre of England is swayed. Then I turn and ask, "Is there any ground upon which the supporters of this Bill can permanently and securely stand?" Where are they to stop? One advocates this measure, and no more; another advocates this measure, and some more; and a third advocates this measure, and a great deal more. Is there any ground upon which the supporters of this Bill can permanently and securely stand? Is the right hon. gentleman prepared to go forward with those who say, "You must not only educate the priests, but you must provide for their subsequent support—you must endow them?" Is he prepared to advance further, and agree with those who say, "You must take the endowment for them from the Established Church?" Is there any ground upon which the supporters of the measure can permanently and securely stand? The right hon. baronet who brought in the Bill pledged himself as strongly as words could speak to support the Irish Church in her present position, and in her present possessions. The member for Sheffield has given notice of motion, that the endowment of Maynooth should be taken out of the present possessions of the Established Church; and the noble Lord the member for Liverpool has avowed his willingness to join with those who would endow the priests. I ask Mr. Gladstone how far is he prepared to go? Is far as Sir R. Peel, or to advance to Lord Sandon? or is he prepared "to go the whole hog," and join Mr. Ward of Sheffield?

I told you I had a plan for your adoption—it has reference to your highly-responsible duty in the use of the civil privileges bestowed upon you, under Divine Providence, as citizens of the state. The time has come, when it seems to be your duty to declare emphatically in what way (at least with regard to this great question), you will resolve to exercise your privileges as electors. I hold in my hand the following declaration, which is to be proposed to you for your signature:—

"We, the undersigned, electors of the borough of Liverpool, honestly believing the Church of Rome to be in doctrine opposed to the Word of God, and in practice subversive of civil and religious liberty, consider all appropriations of public money for its support grossly inconsistent in our professedly Protestant rulers, and at variance with the duties they owe to their subjects.

"For these reasons we hereby declare that no member of Parliament is entitled to the confidence of a Protestant constituency, who will not firmly oppose the contemplated endowment of the Popish College of Maynooth."

"April 14"

The rev. gentleman at some length urged upon the meeting to sign this declaration as once, and to act upon the principles contained in it; and he concluded by recommending the meeting to adjourn for a week, in order that the Protestant operatives of this town might the better be enabled to watch the Ministerial measure, which he was happy to find that Mr. Colquhoun intended to oppose by all the means which the forms of the House allowed.

PUBLIC FEELING AGAINST THE ENDOWMENT OF MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.

On Friday evening, the 11th inst., no less than 121 members presented petitions to the House of Commons against the endowment; and of these, Mr. Hindley presented 350 petitions; Mr. Wakley, 170; Col. Rolleston, 38; Mr. Busfield, 19; Mr. Plumtre, 70; Col. Fox, 107, from 2,291 teachers of Sunday Schools; Mr. Spooner, 23; Sir T. Acland, 20; Mr. Wodehouse, 17; Lord Worsley, 50; Mr. B. Denison, 20; Mr. T. Duncombe, 30; Mr. Colville, 53; Lord Pollington, 40; in all, 1,055 petitions from 14 members. The bulk of the other members presented from 5 to 16 petitions each. To meet this immense display of opinion, Sir Robert Peel presented one petition from the Remonstrant (Unitarian) Synod of Ulster—themselves endowed out of the public purse, and Mr. Hume one, in favour of the measure!

A COMING LORD.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. JOSEPH WOLFF, D.D.

PREACHED AT TRINITY CHURCH, GRAY'S INN-ROAD, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
APRIL 20, 1845.

Before making a Collection on behalf of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, and the Society for promoting the Employment of Additional Curates in Populous Places.

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of his father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end"—Luke i. 30—33.

You perceive, my friends, that this is prophecy. Therefore, for the better understanding of it, we must first of all give you the definition of prophecy. Prophecy is a prediction of an event, which is still to come; a prediction of history.

Now how must such a prophecy be construed, in order to find out the real sense of it? We must try to find out the grammatical meaning of it; and then we must examine whether such a prophecy has really been fulfilled. This is quite common sense; and every one of you will agree with me. Moses himself gives us, in Deuteronomy, this direction, how we may know that a prophet has spoken. If the event he predicted has come to pass, then we may know that a prophet has been among us; if the event does not come to pass, then he has spoken presumptuously and rashly.

Let us now examine this prediction; which had been given already in the twenty-third of Jeremiah, and seventh of Isaiah.

"Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God." And in what was this favour to consist? "And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus." This verse needs no interpretation at all. Every one knows, it is admitted by all, by profane history, by the Jews, in Josephus and in their other writers, the most deadly foes of Christ, that Jesus was born, and that the Virgin Mary was His mother.

"He shall be great." Every one will admit this again—will admit that He was

great. The mode of establishing His religion by twelve fishermen, proved that He was great. His conduct on the cross proved that He was great; He looked down upon His enemies, and prayed for them. His resurrection proved that He had some higher power than a mere creature. That He was great, Infidelity has witnessed in a most remarkable manner. I was struck lately in reading a book I brought from Bokhara; where it is said, that Mahomet has predicted, that his religion shall altogether pull down the religion of the Nazarene throughout the East, and the religion of the Koran be established. Now it is very remarkable, that when his mighty officer and general went into Armenia, and tried to sweep away Christianity there, (where there was a Convent which is still existing, as some travellers who are here well know, and where the great Ignatius Alnoorane, "the enlightener," had preached the Gospel in the second century,) he was not able to convert to Mahomedanism one single district of that territory. Continually their exclamation was—"Christ, God and very Christ, God of very God!" Voltaire also tried to pull down Christ; his exclamation was—"Down with the infamous;" has he succeeded? That this Church is full now, is witness that Christ is great in the nineteenth century, as He was proved in the seventeenth, and in the middle ages, when He still had servants who "worshipped Him in spirit and in truth." This has taken place, then; it is no more prophecy; it has become history.

"He shall be called the Son of the Highest." How do you, members of the Church of England, call him? "Son of the Highest." The Independents? "Son of the Highest." The Kirk of Scotland? "Son of the Highest." I have seen Nestorians in their own mountains, and I asked them—How do you call Christ? Their answer was—"Jesus, the Son of the living God; Jesus, the Son of the Highest." So far, still, the text has become history. But let us go on.

"And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David." Has this taken place?

Before we give any opinion, let us examine how He was the Son of David. It is wonderful how Scripture explains Scripture. In the first of the Romans we read, in the fourth verse, that He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit;" but how was He the Son of David? Why, in the third verse we read, that He was "made of the seed of David"—according to the Spirit? no—"according to the flesh." Then if He was the Son of David according to the flesh, the throne of David which He has, must also be according to the flesh. And that He is to sit upon the throne of His father David "according to the flesh," is decidedly predicted also in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles: "therefore being a prophet," (speaking of David,) "and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."

Here let us examine what is "the throne of David." Now the New Testament is the inspired commentary on the Old, and let us not depart from it; but let us lay altogether aside all human opinions, whether of antiquity or of modern times. "The throne of David" in the whole of the books of Samuel and the Kings, and in Isaiah and all the prophets, refers us to Palestine, of which Jerusalem is the capital. If this, after Christ's coming, in the dispensation of the New Testament, was to be something quite different—if there was to be another "throne of David," the New Testament which is a commentary, would have given us quite different words for it. But does it? No; you have the same words—"the throne of David" in the Old Testament, "the throne of David" in the New.

Then, is this prophecy fulfilled? No; it is not yet fulfilled; and shall not be fulfilled until His second coming in glory.

Here I give you two axioms, which are carried through the whole of the Old and New Testament: Christ was anointed to the threefold office of priest, prophet, and king. As High Priest, He was anointed, and visibly manifested; He was sacrificed on the cross, and passed visibly into heaven. As prophet, He was also anointed and visibly manifested; He spake as "never man spake," and He stood upon the mountain, and multitudes saw the great prophet—"the prophet," as He was called. As king, He was also anointed, but is not yet visibly manifested. Just as David His father, and the type of Christ, was anointed by Samuel, but had not entered his kingly office until Saul was slain; so Christ, who is also anointed as king, has not yet entered that kingly office, and shall not enter it until the antitype of Saul—Antichrist—shall be slain.

This is the drift of Christ's instructions to His disciples on this subject. I know that there are many, who do not completely agree with me; such as Butler, and Bishop Malby, and several bishops in our time. There is a general opinion, current in the Christian Church, that the great fault of the Jews was, that they expected a temporal kingdom, and Christ intended merely to establish a spiritual kingdom, and therefore they disbelieved. Now I ask, is there one single text in the whole of the Scripture, which proves this? On the contrary, He continually tried to prove to the Jews, and to His disciples who were of the same opinion, that their error consisted, not in expecting such a kingdom, but in forgetting that a great event was to intervene. I refer you to the twenty-fourth of Luke. The disciples, after His crucifixion, had got quite discouraged; they said, "We trusted that it had been He, which should have redeemed Israel"—and they (with the rest of the Jews) understood by that their being redeemed from the captivity of the Romans; "to-day is the third day," they said, "and we see nothing; we are disappointed; we are still slaves of the Romans." Now Christ appears; and what does He say to them? "You have misunderstood the prophets?" No; not a word of it. On the contrary, He says—"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" "Yea

believe only one part, with regard to the glory; you forget altogether the other part.' "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?"

The same method which Christ thus took to set them right, was pursued afterwards by the apostles, as you will see in the third of the Acts. "And now, brethren," says the apostle, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers;" and in what did consist their ignorance? "But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled;" He does not say, that all with regard to the glory had been fulfilled, but only the suffering part. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out," (for there is another time to come, which is also predicted,) "when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ," (this is the second time,) "which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive"—for ever to be there? no, "until the times of restitution of all things," (the times of the bringing back of all things to their former condition,) "which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets," and which has not yet been fulfilled.

Now go to a further question: how shall He appear, when He is to come? Again let Scripture answer. I read in the first chapter of the Acts, when they were on the mount of Olives—"And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet." He shall so come "in like manner:" "in the self-same manner"—is the idea conveyed in the Greek text. So then, He was conveyed to heaven by a cloud. How shall He come again? I refer you to the seventh chapter of Daniel. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of

man came with the clouds of heaven." in the self-same manner as He went up.

Where did He stand, when He went up? On "the mount called Olivet." Where shall He stand when He shall come again in glory? I refer you to the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah. "I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives"—the real mount of Olives, not a spiritual one, for it is added—"which is before Jerusalem on the east;" exactly as we find it in the present day, and the self-same spot where He stood when He went up.

Those who deny the personal reign of Christ, (which I believe,) tell us—'Yea, He will come, He will appear visibly, but it will be on the day of judgment.' Then I ask, what do you understand by "the day of judgment?" The idea generally is, that this earth shall be altogether annihilated, and the saints shall be taken away to another place, which is not at all defined. Now let me tell you, if this is spirituality, the Lamas of Tibet believe the same. But to Scripture we must go continually, like Luther, who said, "Hear Scripture—Scripture;" and by this Word we must sift every thing. And where is it said, that this world shall be annihilated? There is not one single text to that effect, in the whole of Scripture. That it shall be purified by fire, as it was purified by water, is true; but it was not annihilated by water—only purified. So it shall be, says St. Peter, by fire.

That Christ is to come for the purpose of building up Jerusalem, is clearly stated in the hundred and second psalm: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear" (in the Hebrew "He shall be seen visibly") "in His glory"—as His glory was frequently seen by the whole nation upon Horeb and mount Sinai. That He shall come to establish a kingdom here on earth, is clearly said in the seventh chapter of Daniel: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, He came with the clouds of heaven, and there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him." That this is not to be in what we call heaven, but that His saints at that time shall reign with Him under the sky, we are told the

twenty-seventh verse of that chapter: "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." And afterwards, in the Revelation, when John, caught up in spirit into heaven, hears the song of the glorified saints, which tells him what their final destiny shall be, what does he hear? I read in the fifth chapter—"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." "On the earth:" you cannot make of this earth heaven, and of heaven earth.

At His first coming, Christ distinctly said to Pilate, "Now is My kingdom not from hence." Shall it never be? Again go to the Revelation—the eleventh chapter: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world" (which were not His at His first coming,) "are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever."

In what state shall the earth be at that time? Filled with sorrow? No; it shall be a beautiful earth. Let me read to you from the seventy-second psalm. "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In His days" (it shall not be as at present, when the righteous are often oppressed, and the unrighteous flourish, but) "the righteous shall flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea," (there is no sea in heaven,) "and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Thy that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him;" I have too much experienced that it is not so now, but it is not proper in the pulpit to speak of myself; "God and nothing but God, and Mahomed the ambassador of God," is their outcry, and the defenceless traveller is frequently put to death. Shall it be so then? "They that dwell in the wilderness, shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him."

But it would detain you too long to enter into the predictions of that time, when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." I must conclude with that which shall be the song of the redeemed creation here on earth. You will find it in the ninety-eighth psalm. "Oh! sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvellous things; His right hand, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory. The Lord hath made known His salvation: His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered His mercy and His truth toward the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth; make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise."

Until that time come, we have to watch and to pray. "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly."

At that time, the great test of our discipleship shall be, as Christ says in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, acts of benevolence—acts of philanthropy. And how can you prove that spirit better, than by promoting those Societies, which try to proclaim Christ our Lord, and the great doctrine of repentance and forgiveness of sins in Him, and His final coming in glory? There are two Societies established, for which a collection will be made—the one for the purpose of promoting Christian Knowledge, the knowledge of that Lord Jesus Christ who "is great," and has proved through ages that He is great; and the other, the Society for providing Additional Curates. I am sure you will contribute towards the support of these Societies.

I am very glad to have seen you an attentive; for the coming of our Lord in glory is a solemn subject. But how much more shall you be solemnised, when you shall one day be stopped in your worldly business, and look out and hear the shout of the angels, and the sound of the trumpet—"Behold, He cometh!"

"I! He comes, with clouds descending,
Once for favour'd sinners slain;
Thou and thou and saints attending,
Swell the triumph of His train.
Hallelujah! See the Son of God appear."

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. TIMOTHY GIBSON, M.A.

Curate and Afternoon Lecturer of St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green; Evening Lecturer of St. George's, Southwark; and alternate Preacher at the Early Sunday Morning Lecture at St. Swithun's.

PREACHED AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
APRIL 6, 1845.

"Her clothing is of wrought gold."—Psalm xlv. 13.

THESE words are spoken of the Church of Christ, which, in the Holy Scriptures, is sometimes called the "spouse," sometimes the "sister," and sometimes, as in the passage from which the text is taken, "the daughter" of the heavenly King. Of this holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, the religious communion to which it is our privilege to belong, is a true branch. Making in her beautiful formularies a full and explicit declaration of "the faith once delivered to the saints," she bears witness to "the truth as it is in Jesus;" and recognising as a fundamental principle, that the blessings of the Gospel are essential to the present and eternal happiness of mankind, like the good shepherd, she waits not for the return of the wanderer, but goes after the lost, "to seek and to save." She sends religion—rears a Church, and places a minister—in almost every little district of our land; and thus proclaims to all "the common salvation." She conveys instruction to the ignorant, support to the weak, consolation to the afflicted, and spiritual nourishment to the pilgrim in his journey through the wilderness.

On the present occasion, it is my desire to call your serious and prayerful attention to one part of the King's daughter's golden attire, in which the wisdom and goodness of God to His Church are conspicuously seen; namely, to our Book of Common Prayer—that "form of sound words," that precious possession which our Church gives us; a possession, it is to be feared, too little valued, and too little improved by many amongst us.

May the Holy Ghost be graciously present with us, to sanctify and bless our

meditations. May He enrich us with more of the "spirit of grace and supplication," and enable us to lift up our souls to heaven, as often as we are called on to take a part in the scriptural services of our Church; that we may not be of the number of those, who "draw nigh unto God with their lips, while their hearts are far from Him;" but that, having been true and faithful worshippers of the Divine Majesty in His Church on earth, we may be admitted into the ranks of the Church triumphant above:

*"May join the heavenly throng,
Their sacred pleasures share,
And sing the everlasting song
With all the ransomed there."*

Let us contemplate "The Book of Common Prayer," first, as a valuable and a suitable help to devotion; and secondly, as breathing a spirit of piety, in perfect accordance with the doctrines and precepts of Holy Scripture.

I. Let us consider the Services of our Church, as constituting a valuable and suitable help to devotion.

Forms of prayer are authorized by the Word of God. Jehovah himself prescribed a form of words, in which He directed the priests under the Jewish dispensation to bless the people. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and his sons, saying, in this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel: saying unto them, The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace"—(Numbers vi. 22—26). Our blessed Lord sanctioned forms of prayer:

He attended the worship of the Jewish Church, in which forms were used, and He taught a form of prayer to His disciples. And what is prayer? Is it listening to man, or is it speaking to God? Certainly, prayer is addressing God; and how can we so well join in prayer to God in the public congregation, as in words which we previously know and approve of? Then we are acquainted beforehand with everything that is spoken; we understand every statement that is made; we unite without hesitation or suspense in every petition that is offered up; and, as it has been well observed, "our worshippers in ten thousand different Churches; each congregation of them are not left to an individual, to be led by him, as it were, to the throne of grace, in the use of such petitions, and in such ways of expressing them, as his piety, or his judgment, or the varying frame of his mind, may allow him to adopt; but are instructed to follow, and pray with the minister, who, in going before the people, and in acting as their voice, is himself led by that which is the product of the collective piety and deliberate wisdom of the Church; and which has been, from time to time, reconsidered and revised by the Church, until by the blessing of God, it has been brought to such an excellent work, that it may well be doubted, whether the attempt to improve it further would not be a thing of much greater hazard than necessity, an enterprise fuller far of danger than of hope."*

The worship of the sanctuary is intended for all; for the poor, as well as the rich; for the ignorant, as well as the learned. It is, therefore, of great importance, that the service of the sanctuary should be comprehensible to all; that all should be able fully to enter into its meaning, and be afforded a free and open channel in which to put out the desires of their hearts before God.

Here, then, we have a great advantage of our Liturgy; every one that can read, has, or may have, in his house and in his hands, this form of plain, as well as of sound words. He may use it in his private approaches to the throne of grace; he may adopt it in his daily applications at the family altar; he may derive from it food for his mental devotion all day long; and he may unite in every part

of it in the public worship of God.

And though here and there there may be a few obsolete words, these, like the ancient sculpture of our venerable Churches, serve to remind us of the many ages through which they have existed; they tell us how, century after century, they have conveyed to heaven the praises of the saints below.

Hence we esteem the voice of our own beloved Church the more, as we grow grey in her bosom; we recollect in how many sorrows it has soothed us, in how many perplexities it has guided us, in how many temptations it has brought us relief. In fact, the more a man has entered into the spirit of the Liturgy, the sweeter associations he has with it.

He entertains the affecting recollection, that he has used it with many, who are gone to worship with "the general assembly and Church of the first-born in heaven;" that he has joined in it with some of the brightest and the best of the people of the Lord. And who does not desire to bear on his lips those prayers and praises, in many of which the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of martyrs, once offered their devotions to God? Whose heart is not warmed by the thought, that upon the golden censer which the Church holds out to him, incense was once offered by those hands which now hold the heavenly palms of victory? that as its perfume ascended, those eyes were once lifted up from earth to God, which now behold the King in his beauty; and those voices once ascended in praise from the temple below, which now unite to swell the chorus of the redeemed above, saying, "Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever."

And how beautifully comprehensive is our form of worship! There is no sorrow, for which we cannot there find utterance; no temptation, but we can there find words to plead with God against it; no secret sin, but we have there a confession for it; no trouble, "in mind, body, or estate," there unprovided for.

My brethren, since our Church has supplied us with a service, thus familiar to our tongues, and which, I trust, is also

* Archdeacon Bather.

dear to our hearts—a service adapted to our every-day wants and wishes, what remains, but that we strive to get our souls affected by the words we utter; that we endeavour to raise our desires to the blessings we pray for; that we steadily fix the eye of faith on Him, to whom we address our supplications? The chariots of fire are prepared for us; it remains only that our souls be warmed by the Divine flame, and mount to heaven.

A peculiar excellence in our Liturgy is, that the people are appointed to take a large and an audible part in it. This is a privilege, of which it is very desirable that you should be sensible; and I, therefore, beseech you to suffer upon this point a word of earnest, of affectionate exhortation. Remember, that God requires, and the Church intends, you not to be hearers only, but worshippers also. Remember, that as you profess to join in the worship of the sanctuary as well as the minister, so should the words used, be used by you, as well as by the minister. Remember, that you, as well as the minister, come to the house of God “to render thanks for the great benefits you have received at His hands, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul;” and that, therefore, you, as well as the minister, should lift up your voices in prayer and praise, and magnify the Lord with your tongues as well as in your hearts. *

The rubrics of our Book of Common Prayer are very clear and explicit, in directing the people to join in the confession, responses, and other appointed parts of the service; and I earnestly entreat you to show respect and veneration towards the Church of which you are members, by giving a careful attention to them, admirably fitted as they are to keep alive devotion, to promote a hallowed sympathy, and to give a glow of earnestness to our worship.

This portion of the service, as performed in the congregations of the early Christians, we are told, was like the roll of distant thunder. And King George the Third, that pious monarch, whose memory is embalmed in all our hearts, was remarkable for his audible and regular repetition of the responses, and would never leave that to be done by

another, which he felt to be a personal privilege, as well as a personal duty.

May a like interest and fervour be witnessed among us; and may all the worshippers in the sanctuary, “with a pure heart and humble voice,”

“Delight to join the loud Amen,
Which echoes through the blest abode;
Which lifts the soul to heaven again;
Dies on the walls, but lives to God.”

Let us contemplate—

II. The Book of Common Prayer, as breathing a spirit of piety, which is in perfect accordance with the doctrines and precepts of Holy Scripture.

It is truly delightful to observe the scriptural character of those services, in which it is appointed that every member of our congregations should take a part, as often as he comes to the house of the Lord. “The matter,” says a pious divine, “is so majestic and meek, so supplicatory of all good, and deprecatory of all evil, so expressive of humility and reverence, of faith and hope, of gratitude and love; and the petitions, though numerous, are so short and devotional, yet so full of the best desires for the Church and the world, for Gentiles and Jews, for the honour of God and the happiness of man, that we cannot imagine an objection in an unprejudiced and Christian mind. That which gives to the whole a peculiar excellency, is the Christian use it makes of that name which is above every name—the name of Jesus, which it delights to exalt. The perpetual reference also to those influences, which alone can direct the understanding and affections of men in the way of wisdom and peace, shows the firm faith of our Reformers in the Holy Ghost, as the Lord and Giver of life. And this imparts vitality to the whole; for this heavenly energy breathes throughout, whether we are pouring forth our desires for our gracious sovereign, or her council; for the clergy, or the people; for the Church, or the world.” *

No one who attentively considers the Book of Common Prayer, can fail to see that our Church lays as the foundation of every one of her ministrations, the scriptural doctrine that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Whether we look to the affecting confession which we have just made, that “we

have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done, and that there is no health in us;" whether we look to the repeated supplications for mercy, which we are taught to offer as "miserable sinners;" or to the Article which declares that "the condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will;" we see the Church bearing a faithful witness to the truth of God's Word, showing her people their transgressions, and her members their sin. And although the formalist and self-righteous may be found in her outward communion, holding sentiments directly opposed to all she acknowledges, they have but to look to her Liturgy and Articles, to discover, that they have understood "neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." That person, who takes into his lips the form of sound words, which they delivered to us who "glorified God in the fires," without a heart-felt acknowledgment of his own sinfulness, is but mocking God, and stands condemned out of his own mouth.

Another doctrine of Holy Scripture taught by our Church is, that "we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings; wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine." In the prayers for the confirmation and increase of our faith; in the manner in which every blessing is sought through a crucified, risen, ascended and interceding Saviour; from the profession of faith in baptism, until a declaration of faith in Jesus as the resurrection and the life, meets the mourner with the promise of immortality, even amidst the triumphs of death; we see in the book which testifies "repentance towards God," for the sinner's warning, written also, as with a sunbeam, a proclamation of "faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," for the sinner's justification. Turning from the arguments of human reason, from the authority of human tradition, our Church

directs us to the cross, and declares to a world of sinners, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear, that Christ is the only foundation of our hope; and exclaims—"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

In our Book of Common Prayer we find, likewise, the breathings of that scriptural "hope which maketh not ashamed." Christian hope gives life to prayer; it is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast;" and, fixed as it is on Christ our forerunner, who has entered for us within the veil, no tempest can tear it from its hold. Our Church points, not to man, nor to any thing that man can do, but declares to us the promises of that God who cannot lie; and, in the strength of those promises, and of them alone, assures all who have been humbled before God because of their sins, who have by faith received His Gospel of reconciliation in all its renewing and sanctifying power, and who have learnt to draw near to a throne of grace, that they shall obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need; and that all the promises of the Gospel are "yea and amen in Christ Jesus."

The spirituality which characterises all the formularies of our Church, and especially her baptismal and burial services, has been made a ground of accusation against her; but the charge is founded in error. She admits into her outward communion, all who profess the saving doctrines of Christianity, leaving it to their own consciences "to examine themselves whether they be indeed in the faith; to prove their own selves." But those, and those only, who have drunk deeply of the living waters which the Church conveys, who have laid hold on the spiritual privileges which she offers, are her true children; and, notwithstanding the impenitent sinner who stands by may prefer husks, these must not lose their bread, these must not be deprived of spiritual nourishment and comfort.

In the Liturgy of our Church, also, as in Holy Scripture, we may behold "the beauty of holiness;" and learn that without that, "no man shall see the Lord." Hence the petitions we are taught to offer up, "that we may be endued with the grace of the Holy Spirit, to amend our lives," that we may be enabled "diligently to live after God's commandments." Hence our entreaties for

humility, for faith, for patience, for love; hence our prayer to our Almighty Father, that He would "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Him and worthily magnify His holy name." And hence our supplication, that "we may follow our Saviour Christ, and be made like unto Him."

So that they who strive to act up to the standards of our Church, will be ever self-abased for their short-comings; and those who live in a state of sin within her communion, will do so after having been faithfully warned, and in the face of the clear light which she has shed upon their path.

And now, my brethren, let me seriously and affectionately ask, what is the testimony of your hearts respecting these things? What has your Church-going taught you? Have the services of our Church been made the means of convincing you more deeply of your own sinfulness and weakness; of showing you more of the love of Him who died for you, and more of your need of the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome sin in your hearts; of creating within you a greater earnestness in promoting your own salvation, and the salvation of your fellow-creatures; and of making you more "thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work?"

If not, be assured you are labouring under a dangerous, a fatal delusion. Think of the Sabbaths you have dishonoured, of the means of grace you have slighted, of the privileges you have abused. Consider that God will assuredly call you to account for these neglected opportunities, these despised mercies. Remember, that "to whom much is given, of them will much be required." Be no longer deceived: "God is not mocked." If the heart be far from Him, the service of the lips is but "an abomination in His sight."

Seek to obtain the spirit of prayer. Ask that in the name of Jesus, and it shall be given you. Watch and pray against a cold, heartless, formal spirit; strive against worldly and wandering thoughts; and supplicate the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, from whom alone all holy desires proceed. Neglect not, delay not, this all-important work. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wis-

dom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

Never imagine that mere outward privileges can save the soul, or that an attention to them, without vital faith, can obtain for you an admission into Paradise at last. Brethren, ye must be born of the Spirit; ye must be accepted in the Beloved, ye must be stamped with the image of God, ye must have your heads and hearts attuned to the devotion of heaven, or ye can never enter the "temple not made with hands," or mingle in the ceaseless adoration that surrounds the everlasting throne.

Those who have been taught by their Book of Common Prayer, to know something of their own lost estate by nature, and of the inestimable love of God in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, will have learnt how to value as they ought, that "form of sound words." Knowing that by the foolishness of preaching it pleases God to save those that believe, they will hear the Word preached by the appointed ministers of Christ with attention, and with prayer that it may not be heard by themselves, or others, in vain. They will pray for their bishops, priests, and deacons, that they may be endued "with true knowledge and understanding of God's Word, and that both by their preaching and living, they may set it forth, and show it accordingly." And when their minister says—"The Lord be with you;" they will answer from the heart, as well as with the voice, "And with Thy spirit."

Aware that it is impossible to walk in the ordinances of God, and to serve Him, without His special grace; they will beg God to give them a heart to love and fear Him, and diligently to live after His commandments. They will, with compassionate regard for the souls of their fellow-creatures, beseech our heavenly Father, "to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived." They will join with their hearts and with their voices in singing "to the praise and glory of God." They will, like the Psalmist, "love the habitation of the Lord's house, and the place where His honour dwelleth;" will delight to go "into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise;" will account a day in His service better than a thousand; and will be enabled to say with something, at least, of that feeling which dwelt in the breast of the sweet singer of Israel, "My soul

longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God." "Come then," I beseech you, in the words of our Homily, "come to Church on the Sabbath day, and come in your Sabbath day garment; that is to say, come with a cheerful and a godly mind; come to seek God's glory, and be thankful unto Him; come to be at one with thy neighbour, and to enter into friendship and charity with

Him. Come with a heart sifted and cleansed from worldly and carnal affections and desires; and shake off all vain thoughts which may hinder thee from God's true service; that after thy duty duly done in this earthly temple and Church, thou mayest ascend, and be received into the glorious temple of God in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, for ever. Amen."

EXTRACT FROM A TEXT BOOK OF MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.

On the 3rd of May, 1825, before the "Select Committee of the House of Lords on the State of Ireland," His Grace the (late) Archbishop of Dublin, gave the following evidence, p. 419:—

"As your Grace prepared to inform the Committee in what manner the doctrine of exclusive salvation and its effects are taught at Maynooth, by any text book?—I have the text book of Maynooth in my possession.

"There is a description of what may be the consequences of the doctrine of exclusive salvation at the day of judgment, is there not?—There is a very strong one: It is a description of the difference between the state of the Protestant and that of the Roman Catholic, when called to the final tribunal at the day of judgment. The words are these the translation of which is as follows:—

"The Protestant when called to judgment, will appear provided with no other aid than '*his own private judgment*,' with which he searched the Scriptures, and proved the articles of his creed. although he had been again and again warned, that he acted so '*at his own great peril*,' and that a *more acute account* would be required of him for *this very thing*. What follower of the Reformed Churches, reflecting on this, and considering how natural it is for man, from the frailty of his nature, to err, but must look with terror to the sentence of his most severe Judge?

"But how different would be the lot of the Catholic? Even though (which let it not be believed) he should have fallen into error in obeying the decrees of the Church concerning doctrine; might he not fearlessly reply to his Supreme Judge interrogating him concerning this?—'O Lord, if that be

an error which we have followed, THOU THYSELF HAST DECEIVED US by Thy command, so clearly and repeatedly announced, that we should hear the Church as THYSELF, unless we wished to have our part with the heathen.—(Matt. xviii. and Luke x.) THOU THYSELF HAST DECEIVED US, by Thy apostles, by the pastors and doctors, which Thou hadst appointed in Thy Church for the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of Thy body.—(Eph. iv.), who commanded us so to act, THOU, THYSELF, hast deceived us through Thy Church, called by Paul *the pillar and ground of truth*.—(1 Tim. iii.) For that Church, by its decrees, always exacted from its children a firm assent in heart and soul, under the denunciations in Thy name of an eternal curse against those who refused to obey its authority. Conspicuous alas! of our ignorance in Divine things, and of the infirmity of human reason, how could we have trusted to ourselves in searching the Scriptures, and have despised an authority so pre-eminent? *Fearlessly, we say, O Lord, if it be an error which we have followed, THOU THYSELF HAST DECEIVED US, AND WE ARE EXCUSED.*" Removing every prejudice of birth, education, fortune, and all other circumstances, let the reader, supposing himself to be summoned to-morrow before the tribunal of God, to render an account of his faith and motives, conclude what part prudence should suggest to him to act, whether that of the Protestant, or of the Catholic.—*Tractatus de Ecclesiâ, p. 511.*"

PROPOSED NATIONAL GRANT
TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE AT MAYNOOTH.

SPEECH

OF THE

REV. HUGH M'NEILE, M.A.,

AT A MEETING OF THE LIVERPOOL PROTESTANT OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION,
HELD AT THE MUSIC HALL, ON MONDAY, APRIL 21, 1845.

THIS meeting is held by adjournment from last Monday evening; and I have to remind you, that it consists of the members and friends of the Liverpool Protestant Operative Association, joined on the present occasion by the members and friends of the Toxteth Protestant Operative Association. In thus assembling and re-assembling, we are not actuated by any desire to find fault with others, nor to hinder any of our fellow-subjects from enjoying any advantages, that can really conduce to their true happiness, but we are assembled under a deep sense of our own responsibilities and consequent Christian duties. The question now before the kingdom, is the whole question of the Protestant Reformation—a question of the moral conquests of three centuries. The Reformation of England consisted of two leading branches, the one theological, and the other legislative. In theology, the victory was won by our faithful controversialists—Right Rev. Prelates and others, many of whom sealed with their blood their testimony to the all-sufficiency of the Son of God as the Saviour of sinful man. In legislation, the victory was consolidated from time to time, until at last triumph was inscribed on the banner of England by the Act of Settlement. After that decisive victory, followed a period of peace. I will not say the best possible use was made of that interval; alas! it was far otherwise. And now the contest is renewed along the whole line of this great subject. The Tractarians in theology, and the Parliament in legislation, are both busy in the service of Rome. In opposition to both of them, we are associated in defence of the British Reformation; and, I am thankful to say, the voice of Britain “out of doors,” as they call it, is with us.

Our sense of duty, my friends, is not superficial or transient; it rests upon our deepest and most abiding convictions. With the sacred Scriptures in our hands, and the history of the Christian Church before us, in its primitive purity and its subsequent defilement, we believe, and are persuaded, that Romanism is fraught with dishonour to God, and is destructive to our fellow-creatures. With the political history of the world also open before us, we are equally persuaded, that Roman-

ism, as a system, is so essentially opposed to the well-balanced interests of authority in the ruler, and liberty in the subject, that in proportion as that system is raised into ascendancy, the nations of the earth must sink into slavery—slavery mental and bodily, slavery civil and religious. We perceive with pain, that the present discussion of the great principles of the Reformation is entangled and fettered by the question of endowments; and that both the tone and practice of the legislature is tending strongly and rapidly beyond the bounds of just toleration and protection, even to the indiscriminate support, from the public treasury, of all sorts of religious bodies, without regard to the agreement with, or opposition to, the Word of God, of the opinions which they maintain. I am much struck with the contrast in this respect, between England, as now represented (should I not rather say, on this question, misrepresented?) by the present House of Commons, and Rome—Rome Pagan, as well as Rome Papal. The religion, if it deserved the name, of the Pagan Roman Empire in the zenith of its grandeur, was a gorgeous polytheism, supported by the public revenues. The policy of the empire was tolerant of all sorts of opinions concerning the gods and the unseen world. The enlightened statesmen of the Augustan age had attained to that fashionable indifference about creeds, which we see so remarkably exemplified in the instance of Galileo. When this accomplished specimen of the then rising generation was deputy-governor of Achaia, he was called on in his judicial capacity to decide in a matter of dispute between Jews and Greeks; it involved the whole question of revealed religion, as opposed to a traditional polytheism; but the young Roman saw nothing in it but “a question of words and names,” not deserving his attention. He turned away from both the dispute and the disputants, and “cared for none of these things.” It is of some consequence, however, to remark, that while Pagan Rome tolerated all sorts of religions, she supported only one. No temples were built at the public expence, except for the State religion; no priesthood was educated or paid from the public treasury, except for the State wor-

ship. The Jews were allowed to have their synagogues in every town, to have their own priests, and enjoy their own worship; but it was entirely at their own expence. Toleration and protection were distinguished from support. All were tolerated; all were protected; but only the State religion was supported. This was the reasonable extent to which Imperial Pagan Rome carried her liberalism. It was reserved for our own days, to see an advance upon this: to see an enlightened State, having a national religion, and not only tolerating and protecting those who teach—and are pledged on oath to teach—that her national religion is heresy, but actually educating them for the purpose, and paying for their education out of the national treasury! This out-Gallio Gallio.

The contrast with Rome Papal is still more striking; because her policy has never been toleration, abstractedly held, and voluntarily exercised. Her toleration has rather been policy, put on for a purpose and for a time, when danger would have been increased by acting on her more genuine sentiments. In proof of this, I shall not have recourse to any voluminous and elaborate treatise, in the hands of the learned only, but simply to the short and popular notes appended by authority to the Rhemish Testament, and inculcated as widely as Papal Rome has ever allowed the Word of God, even with her own notes, to be circulated. On the parable of the tares, in the twelfth chapter of St. Matthew, the significant note is this:—

29. "Lest you plucke vp also] The good must tolerate the evil, when it is so strong that it can not be redressed without danger and disturbance of the whole Church, and committe the matter to God's judgement in the latter day. Otherwise where lieth (be they here's or other malefactors) may be punished or suppressed"—

Suppressed! What is the meaning of suppression?

"—without disturbance and hazard of the good, they may and ought by publike authority, either spiritual or temporal, to be chastized or executed."

Now, methinks I hear the sound of the meeting held last week in London, with a noble lord in the chair, where resolutions were passed civilly expressive of sorrow that Protestants should lay to the charge of their Catholic brethren what has been so often and so successfully refuted. I venture to ask of the noble chairman of that meeting, where this charge has been refuted? when this charge has been refuted? by whom has this charge been refuted? And I venture to send a letter to Lord Camoys, through those "ready writers" the reporters, that if his lordship will have the kindness to point out where, when, and by whom this charge has been refuted, an answer shall be speedily supplied. Has any Synod of the Romish Church met to con-

demn the notes of the Rhemish Testament? Have the authorities of that Church expunged those notes as heretical? Has any authoritative step been taken, by which the Church is bound, to clear it of the charge of holding the doctrines which are here circulated by authority, in the notes of her Rhemish Testament, the only translation into English which they have to circulate? You will recollect that the Old Testament, called the Douay Bible, and the Rhemish Testament, form one publication of the Scriptures, when put together, and is the only authorised edition which they have translated into English. These notes I have read, form part of the Rhemish Testament; and I hold in my hand a copy of that book, published by the authority of that Church. If they could clear themselves of the charge, we should be thankful to see it; but so long as these notes are published by authority, as the only English Testament they have; so long as they may be applied to, as soon as the danger of putting them into practice shall have passed away; we must be excused if we cannot take the word of Lord Camoys, when he says, that the charge has been often and successfully refuted. Upon this principle, toleration is Rome's policy at present, and her practice in England, where at present she has no power to do anything else; but, for the instruction of Lord Camoys and his coadjutors at that meeting, I may venture to assert, that in some parts of Ireland, where Protestants, especially converts from the Church of Rome, may be put out of the way without danger to the faithful—there Rome begins to be more sincere; and in Madeira, where she has full opportunity of pleasing herself, she has given practical proof that the Rhemish notes are not merely a dead letter.

What, then, should England do? I certainly cannot commend to the imitation of our country the example of Papal Rome. I trust, that no British authorities may ever be found profaning their power by inflicting any injury on any man because of his religious opinions. But I do most cordially commend for imitation on this particular point the example of Pagan Rome: she tolerated all, she protected all; in return for this protection, she levied taxes from all; but she endowed only that which she believed to be agreeable to her gods. This is an example worthy of imitation. But if it be argued still, that it is invidious, and seems to be unfair, that in a divided nation, where all pay taxes, public money for religious purposes should be given on one side only, what have we to answer? For myself—and I believe I shall not be alone in this—I answer, that if the religious percep-

tions of Englishmen be indeed so indistinct, that they cannot clearly and broadly separate fundamental truth from destructive error; and if their faith in God be so weak relatively with their courtesy towards one another, that they cannot feel justified in giving practical preference to acknowledged truth; then, as the next best thing, I would recommend the entire cessation, after reasonable notice and saving of existing interests, of all grants of public money for religious purposes.

And if the inquiry be further made, as of course it will, should this extend to and include the Established Church? I answer, first, there is an essential difference between a proprietor and a trustee, and no one but a proprietor can ever become a donor. The State is not, and never was, the proprietor of the property of the Established Church. That property was given by various individuals at various times, under laws and regulations which constituted the State its official trustee; and although the State has the power, of course, to alter the laws, it would be a breach of trust to alienate that property from the purposes for which the voluntary donors originally bestowed it. This constitutes a difference between the property of the Established Church, and grants from the public treasury; and this appears to me to be conclusive, as far as that portion of Church property is concerned, which was so entrusted in this kingdom, previous to the introduction of Roman Catholic doctrines. The ecclesiastical body corporate, which then existed, held identically the same opinions that the Established Church holds now. The Nicene creed, which is our creed, was also their creed. The new articles of Pope Pius the Fourth, which we repudiate, they had never heard of. Thus, the Primitive and the Protestant were one—one in all that constitutes, or can constitute, the identity of a body corporate; not one in the very individuals composing it, but one company associated for the same purpose, and holding the same opinions.

This opens, while as yet it leaves untouched, another feature of the case. During the time that Roman Catholic opinions prevailed, additions were made to the property of the Church—large additions in both houses and lands. Granted. I am free to admit, that if a distinction could be clearly drawn, if a separation could be made between the primitive portion of Church property and the Papal additions to Church property, and if the intentions of the donor, irrespective of truth or falsehood, were binding upon the trustee, I think, and I freely admit, and boldly say, that then—if that were so—

the State would be as much bound to apply the Papal portion of Church property to those that represent the Papal doctrines, as to apply the primitive portion of Church property to those who represent the primitive doctrines. But the distinction cannot be made. It is absolutely impossible to make the separation. Even independent of the great question of truth or error, an equitable adjustment is absolutely impossible. In the meantime, the nation has declared again and again, that the question of truth or error ought to have chief weight. The Act of Settlement—eminently a national act—proclaimed that truth should be paramount, and truth alone endowed in England. The influence of that Act—still eminently a national sentiment—modified the concessions of 1829, and rendered the continued Protestantism of the sovereign, and the keeper of the great seal, imperative in England. The State, also, as the trustee, has continued Protestant. If that is now to continue no longer—if the State as trustee can no longer feel justified in applying the whole of the Church property to one class, without finding resources somewhere else, to give funds and endowments to another class—if this alternative must be put and acted upon (mind these hypotheses)—if truth and falsehood can no longer be distinguished so as to be the basis of action, and if the other alternative must be acted upon in England—Is Romanism to be endowed, is Socinianism to be endowed, for the sake of fair play? or is the Church of England to be disendowed in order to get rid of apparent preferences and partialities? I say if that alternative be so put, my answer is this, and I believe I shall not be alone in it—'rather let the State confiscate every farthing of Church property, and apply it to national purposes, than endow with one penny, that which is fundamental error. The alternative is a solemn one; but every thing is comparative, and I hold it to be a minor evil to be guilty of sacrilege against the intentions of human testators and donors, than to be guilty of blaspheming against the plainly revealed will of Almighty God.

And now, as regards the truth. I have watched the course of the debate last week. I have been anxious to see whether the question of truth or error would be taken up by any honourable or right hon. gentleman, or noble lord in the House. I made an attempt, as you know, to get the question of the truth or falsehood of the matter canvassed, before the debate began. There was no response—no entering into the question. Last Monday night I told you, at the beginning of the debate, that branch of the subject was not taken up at all, but, in

the course of the week, there was one, a master's hand, applied to it. The right hon. gentleman the member for Edinburgh, (Mr. Macaulay,) in a very splendid and talented speech, did, for a little while, attempt to grapple with this great subject. He did it in this way. I have not the paper with me, and therefore quote from memory; but what I say is substantially correct. He said, that, in endowing the Church of Scotland, and the Church of England, you were endowing error, because there is nothing perfect. There is some error, in every Church, he said; the Church of Scotland and the Church of England disagree in some things; they cannot both be perfectly right; therefore, in endowing both, you are endowing some error. Then he spoke of the translations of the Scriptures into the languages of the East—translations containing, in the first instance, many errors, yet they were circulated; and he drew an argument from thence, that, as you are under an inevitable necessity to endow some error, therefore you are only doing what you have been already doing, and what you cannot help doing, when you endow Popery. This was the substance of the right hon. gentleman's argument; only I have rendered it from his high and polished elocution, down to the plain English of her Majesty's subjects, the Protestant Operatives of Liverpool. And in similar plain English I want to tell you what I think of it. I want to ask you whether there is not a very considerable difference between nutritious food, containing, as much of our food does contain, some mixture of poison, (such is the strange order of things,) and a poisonous dose outright? Is there not an essential difference between the propagation of substantial truth, although it be inevitably allied with some admixture of error, and the propagation of notorious, fundamental, destructive error? I would ask the right hon. gentleman whether he does not recognize the difference between essential and non-essential things? I know the Church of England and the Church of Scotland differ, but in what? Why, one has a Church government with what is called a bishop at the head of it, and the other has men at the head of it for a year, whom they call Presbyters, and, once a year, when they meet in Edinburgh, they have a Moderator of all the Presbyters; and, during the meeting, he is the Bishop of Scotland. These are differences; but in what respect are they parallel to the difference between Romanism and Christianity? In what respect are they parallel to the difference between the one offering once offered upon the cross on Calvary, and the offering of the sacrifice of the mass? The

differences in the one case are infinitesimal doses of error; the differences in the other are substrata of error. Yet this, positively, is the only attempt I have seen, in the course of the debate, to meet by argument the great question in this case, of the difference between truth and error.

It was with no small concern that I saw, towards the close of the final speech in the debate—in the speech of the right honourable baronet at the head of her Majesty's government—a reference to the agitation in Ireland—the agitation which has for its object the dismemberment of the empire. It was, I repeat, with no small concern that I observed the right hon. gentleman said, that that agitation could not be suppressed by force; and upon this ground he advocated the measure before the house, as a mode of suppressing the agitation by kindness. I would venture to say to that right hon. gentleman, entrusted as he is with the government of this country, that it is the duty of the government, so long as the law is as it is, to see that law respected. The union between England and Ireland is the law; and I say it is holding out a premium upon disaffection, agitation, and rebellion, for a gentleman in his situation to tell the country that the law cannot be upheld, (for that is the meaning of it,) and that the agitation cannot be suppressed. The agitation is against the law; and it is saying, in other words, that, as the law cannot be maintained by the power of the State, it must be altered, in order to please the disaffected, and in order to cater to the appetites of the rebellious. This I conceive to have been one of the most dangerous sentiments that have been uttered for years, by any member of her Majesty's government. I consider, that to tell the nation from that high place, that the law cannot be maintained by the power of the State, but it must be altered to meet the demands of the disaffected, is a most revolutionary sentiment.

Is it any wonder, then, that we are associated to oppose this measure? Are we not perfectly justified in using every constitutional effort in our power to hinder this measure, or, if it should pass, to remedy it at the earliest possible opportunity? Are we not perfectly justified in signing such a declaration as that which was submitted to you last week? I have been making inquiry, and I believe I shall be quite justified when I tell you, that upon comparing the sheets with the poll-book, in order to guard against any unintentional zeal upon the part of non-electors who might have signed the declaration, supposing it to be a petition, but who really were not qualified to sign

it, seeing it is a declaration of electors only, —upwards of 1,000 voters have appended their names to that declaration within the week. I anticipate twice that number within a very short time. I have before told you of the use to be made of this declaration. You must be early in the field, if your measure of political influence is to be practically efficient. To be early in the field, you must have this declaration ready to send to the gentlemen who compose the Conservative Society, who, in their combined wisdom, associate for the purpose of selecting the candidate to represent you in parliament. They met in conclave the last time when Mr. Justice Crosswell was appointed to the bench and left a vacancy to determine whether they would propose Sir Howard Douglas, your present member, or Mr. Colquhoun. After some debate, they determined upon Sir Howard Douglas. All the time you know nothing about it. The first you heard of it was, that "there was a candidate." But you had no choice. If you leave the matter to the last now, you will be carried down with the stream, and you will have no choice. In order to have an independent will, you must have an early will. Here is the opportunity. We are giving you an opportunity of an early will. One or two thousand of you sign this declaration; then we will send it in to the Conservative Committee; and when they sit down to consider who will be a fit and proper candidate to select, they will have to consider this—'We want to have a Conservative candidate, but look at these 1,500 or 2,000 fellows, they will have a Protestant.' They will say, 'If we select for a candidate a Conservative who is not a Protestant'—a queer sort of a combined animal—'if we select a Conservative who voted for the Maynooth grant, and the Radicals bring forward a candidate, these 1,500 or 2,000 men will walk away; thus, the Radical will be in; and it will be our fault, for they gave us notice.' This is the very turning point. They will blame you for letting the Radical in; but if you have the first word, and if they do not choose a Protestant, you can blame them. This is the plain English of the present movement; and seeing that the interests of the Reformation are at stake, I consider myself altogether in my place, when I am encouraging this movement.

And this leads me to give you another piece of information, which I am happy to be able to do. There are some persons, who pretend to despise Episcopal authority, but when they think they have got it on their side, then they make much of it. A mistake, which I was going to call an unfortunate mistake, but it will

turn out otherwise—a mistake was made concerning our venerated Bishop, in some of the London evening papers. They represented his Lordship as having said, on this subject, that, for the purpose of conciliating Ireland, he would give the proposal his support. This caused consternation in some, and I do not wonder at it; for I must say, that the accuracy of our daily papers is most marvellous, and I wonder not that such an error, in such a quarter, should have produced this effect. But an error it was. When I heard of it, I bethought myself of the Bishop's letter on this very subject. You recollect the meeting we had at the Amphitheatre a fortnight ago. Dr. Tattershall, who was chairman of that meeting, wrote to tell the Bishop of the petition that was to emanate from that meeting, and to ask his lordship whether he would present it to the House of Lords. I hold in my hands the Bishop's reply, from which I shall read an extract:—

Euston Square, April 11.

My dear Dr. Tattershall,—I shall have great pleasure in presenting your petition, and heartily wish it were likely to meet with success proportioned to the justice of its prayer.

J. B. CHESTER.

I see a reverend brother on the platform, who has also had a letter from the Bishop to the same effect, of the substance of which, if he has not the original in his possession, I hope he will inform you; but, in the mean time, I have great pleasure in proclaiming the Bishop's strong assertion of coincidence with us on this very subject. Before I sit down, I will read another letter emanating from the meeting at the Amphitheatre. There was a petition from that meeting to the House of Commons, as well as to the House of Lords; and a vote of thanks passed to Sir Howard Douglas, and other members. I now hold in my hand Sir Howard's reply. It is as follows:—

Great Street, April 12, 1845.

My dear Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 10th instant, and to acquaint you that the petition which accompanied your letter was presented to the House of Commons yesterday by my noble colleague.

I receive with great gratification the vote of thanks from the great meeting by which that petition was voted. I thank you, my dear sir, for the terms in which you communicate to me that expression of public feeling on this most important subject, and beg to assure you, that I shall continue to act on this, as on all other occasions, in conformity with a firm and steady attachment to the great principles of the Reformation.

I have the honour to be, my dear sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,
HOWARD DOUGLAS.

The Rev. Dr. Tattershall.

I have now to call upon every man of you who has the franchise in this town—I am going to make a demand, and it is a fair one—it is this, that you will, every one of you, do your part in this question, just as you have seen me do mine.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.

The following quotation was omitted in our report of the Rev. HUGH M'NICH'S speech, *Nov. p. 259*; it relates to *et cetera* sins.

The Council of Trent, session xiv. ch. 5, has decreed that, even in the confessional, they may be concealed without incurring blame. This is too palatable a doctrine not to be popular; and therefore with-
over the people are taught to rank among venial sins, they are in fact taught to commit with impunity. Bearing this in mind, hear now what the Class Book of Maynooth inculcates under the head of the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." The second question discussed, is—

How great must be the quantity of the thing stolen, in order to constitute a mortal sin?

Answer.—This quantity cannot easily be determined, as nothing has been decided on the point either in natural, divine, or human law—*cum natura naturalis, nec divina, nec humana, quidquid eade re statutum sit*—some are of opinion that the quantity need only be for the maintenance of an individual for one day in a manner suitable to his station in the world is sufficient to make the theft a mortal sin. Others think that it requires a quantity which, every thing considered, inflicts a serious injury on our neighbour, and deprives him of something particularly useful. A loss however, which in respect of one, a rich man for instance, is slight—in respect of a poor man may be considered heavy. The same quantity in all thefts cannot therefore be assigned as constituting the subject matter of a mortal sin.

Hence theologians are accustomed to distinguish men into four ranks. The first rank consists of the illustrious, who live in splendour. The second of those who live on their own estates, but not as landlords, such as is moderately rich. The third of artificers who support themselves by their own labour and handicraft. The fourth, of the poor, who provide for themselves by begging. It is generally laid down and it may be laid down as determined that in order to a theft being a mortal sin when committed on persons of the first rank, *fifty pence* are sufficient. In fact, this appears to be a sufficient sum with reference to all men, even poor, because this sum of money is considerable in itself, and might be of service to many since it could be sufficient for the pay of several soldiers for one day. With respect to persons of the second rank, *forty pence* are enough. With respect to persons of the third rank, if they trade by a very lucrative one, *twenty pence*, if less lucrative, *ten pence*. With respect to persons of the fourth rank, *five pence* are sufficient.

But there is no one who does not perceive that the division mentioned above is very inadequate. It is very a difference is there among artists? How many live on their own estates who are not so well situated than some merchants, to whom the theft of the same sum would be a greater loss than to merchants who are richer than they? Hence we do not give the above-mentioned rule as a thing on which you can rely with certainty; but it is good as being something to guide conscience, taking all circumstances prudently into consideration. — *Nov. at Theology vol. II p. 252 Treatise on the precepts of the Decalogue*

The next question is—

Does a person sin mortally who steals trifling sums from one or from several persons, which when put together make up a considerable sum?

This is answered in the affirmative, but a caution is added, in which the students are told to observe—

That, according to many Divines a somewhat great quantity is required to be stolen in order to constitute a mortal sin when the small thefts which make it up have been committed diffu-

sely and on many individuals than if they were all committed at the same time and on the same person. The reason for this is, that the law bearing on this subject is distributed over a considerable time, and committed against various persons, a somewhat larger quantity is required to constitute them mortal sins.

No definite measure of time, or number of persons, or amount of increase in the matter of the theft, is laid down; and therefore the thief himself is left to his own discretion to determine when he has committed a sin which must be confessed; and how long he has confined himself to those only which may be concealed without incurring blame.

The seventh question treated of was—
Whether one can commit a mortal sin of theft if contrary to the reasonable wishes of their neighbour they secretly take anything considerable from the property which is used by the owner of the house?

It is answered—

That they commit a mortal sin of theft by such thefts, greatly injuring the right of the husband. But what quantity ought to be accounted considerable in these thefts cannot easily be determined. One can thing is certain, that a greater quantity is required in thefts committed by a wife or a son than in thefts committed by strangers because a husband or the father of a family is more unwilling that money should be taken by a stranger than by a wife or a son.

It is not a theft if a wife secretly abstracts from their common property as much as is necessary to support an indigent father or mother, or children by a former marriage; or over and above to some doctors for a brother and sister, leave, however being first asked from the husband. But if he shall have withheld the same and ought to assist them out of her own dowry. For it is a natural obligation which a husband cannot obstruct. Nevertheless whatever the wife has given away to others she is bound to account for and risk in a part of her dowry when she comes to a division of the property with the husband. *Ibid p. 238*

The eighth question considered is—

What is to be thought of servants who pilfer anything from their masters?

Answer—

That they sin mortally if they pilfer a considerable quantity usually of a small peasant. But if they steal in money, furniture or such thing the same quantity is required to constitute a mortal sin as if they were strangers, nay rather the crime is more detestable as well because the violator of the trust reposed in them by their master as because their masters are often most distressed, and if a stranger stole from them.

But if servants should plunder anything to eat they do not always sin, that is to say if it be some food which their masters would readily permit them to use, if leave were asked from them. (It is at least the sin more venially and a greater quantity is required to make a mortal sin than with respect to strangers, because it would be generally contrary to the wishes of a master. They sin however if they plunder for the purpose of carousing or in order to sell or give away to others, or if they should make use of dainties and clothes which the master wishes to reserve for himself and which are usually all that

"THE WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH"

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. JAMES PARSONS

PUBLISHED AT SURREY CHAPEL, BLACKFRIARS ROAD, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
APRIL 27, 1845.

"The whole family in heaven and earth."—Ephesians ii. 15.

The revelations that are made to us in the Christian religion, both of the present relations and future destinies of man, form the most striking argument for its Divinity that has been supplied to us. They are so remarkably beautiful, and are so precisely adapted to the character and wants of man, that it seems but a reasonable conclusion, to ascribe their origin to the all-perfect mind of Him who made the universe, and we have but to embrace them for ourselves with an implicit confidence, in order that we may receive all their instruction, and all their joy.

One class of the revelations presented by our holy religion is remarkably touching and beautiful, as setting forth a domestic constitution originating in the eternal purpose of God which comprehends in it the noblest intelligences in the universe, and which is constantly operating towards the most glorious end. That domestic constitution, you observe, is presented to us in the language we have read as our text and it is repeated in various passages, of which during the course of our address you may be reminded. When we rightly meditate upon it, we shall find it to be identified with the most valuable instruction and the most animating encouragement, and attracting us onward with delightful power towards that future and final state of existence, which awaits us in our heavenly home.

Let us now contemplate "the whole family in heaven and earth," and let us notice the Head of this family, its members, its duties, its privileges, and its consolation.

I first, we are bound to notice the Head of this family. And He is the great and everlasting God. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the family is named, after whom it is named—the great originator of it, the great compactor together of it, and He is also the Father of those, of whom the family is composed.

In various points of view, as I need scarcely remind you, God presents Himself in the character of a parent—the head of a numerous offspring, all entirely dependant upon Him. This relationship is one He sustains to all finite beings, without exception and He sustains it with peculiar emphasis towards those, whom we are now to contemplate—finite beings who are separated from the common mass, placed by Him under special superintendence, and endowed by Him with special grace. He is by eminence their Father. The devout acknowledgment, my brethren, of God, in the relationship in which He is here presented is one which ought to be diligently and constantly cultivated. All the views of the Divine character presented in the inspired Word, are important, but perhaps none are so important as is the view in which He is now displayed—the benignant and Almighty Father of a numerous offspring, owing being and blessedness to Him, presiding over it with all the majesty of authority and with all the tenderness of love. There is here a development at once of His purposes, of His character, and of His dispensations, transcendently comprehensive and beautiful, and embodying, in fact, whatever we have been accustomed to include under the appellation of His glory. Let it, then, my brethren, be pondered and studied by yourselves, and if, especially, you have reason to believe that you have been made partakers of that great economy, within which the riches of His paternal tenderness are especially embodied and displayed let it be the absorbing theme of your intellect, and the supreme delight of your hearts. God is our Father, "our Father who is in heaven." Happy, and only happy, is he, who is enabled personally to appropriate Him, and personally to pronounce—"He is mine!"

Here, then, is the Head of this great family.

III. Let us next proceed to observe its members. They are numerous and varied. The language of our text speaks of a "family in heaven and in earth." Here are comprehended the inhabitants of regions visible and invisible, and they must now, as each is presented here, briefly pass under our review.

There are those, who compose the family in heaven—for we take the term "heaven" without debate or controversy, as signifying really and truly the celestial world. And these, my brethren, are the holy angels—those lofty and dignified spirits, who were the first handiwork of the glorious Creator, possessing vast capacities, sustained in perfect holiness, and endowed with deathless existence. According to the language of inspiration, we find that they reside constantly in the celestial regions, in hosts bright and innumerable, all depending on God, and all owning God as being their Father. There are also other beings, who were once the inhabitants of our own world, but who reside with the angels in those celestial mansions—"the spirits of just men that are made perfect," men whose spirits rose at death to that higher state, and men who in that higher state are made perfect in holiness and in felicity. By these, "the family in heaven" has been constantly multiplied and augmented, from the commencement of time until now, and these must be regarded as the most precious trophies, which the infinite love of the Father has made, or can make, His own.

As to the members of this "family on earth," the persons who compose this department, are men now living, who have been redeemed from their original corruption and depravity, and who have been brought into a state of reconciliation and acceptance before God. They are constituted the children of God, by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit on their hearts. The Holy Spirit convinces them of sin, the Holy Spirit leads them to "repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ," His Son, the Holy Spirit applies to them, through their faith in the Son, the great sacrifice He has offered on the cross, by which they are reconciled and justified; and the Holy Spirit inspires in them those moral principles and habits, by which they become assimilated and conformed to the Father's character and will. This pro-

cess is that which was undergone by all who are numbered among the "spirits of the just made perfect," and this process, as essential to an introduction into the family, must remain unaltered, even to the end. You observe, the apostle has beautifully stated the urgency of this process, in the preceding chapter. "Through Him, we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and we are described by a change of figure, as 'being builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.' You remember, also how, in the preceding epistle, under divers designations, he describes this condition in this memorable language, in the fourth chapter of Galatians, the fourth and following verses—'When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God, through Christ.'

So, my brethren, then does God constitute His family. So has He gathered multitudes of men to Himself in the early ages, so is He now performing the purposes of His love; and so will He yet continue, until He shall have vindicated His paternal character, and achieved His paternal triumphs, throughout the vast expanse of our apostate and long distracted world.

Many are in the house of God now, who have thus been introduced into the family of God. Let us, brethren, be glad, and let us exult in our privilege. Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"

III. From noticing the Head of this family, and its members, we proceed now to notice its duties.

We can form no idea of a family, without an associated idea of duties. One is indispensable in its connection with the other. These duties are owing to God, and they are owing to each other.

As to the duties which are owing to God

the great Head of the household has demanded a certain tribute from His children, which it is their obligation cheerfully and unreservedly to pay. They are to adore His majesty, they are to be grateful for His goodness, they are to obey and perform His will. These are their unchanging and eternal obligations. That tribute is rendered, and in perfection, by those who constitute the "family in heaven"—the angels, and spirits of the just. Nor could they be in heaven, except their adoration, their gratitude and their obedience were rendered without an error and without a stain. The services rendered by those residing "on earth," are all tainted by impurity and imperfection, the renovation of their nature by Divine grace, yet leaving within it much of the power and the impurity of sin. Yet it is ever their deep lamentation, that they render but scantily what their Father requires, and it is also their particular endeavour, that they may rise above the elements that deform them, that they may "cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness, in the fear of God." This is the constant ambition of every renovated mind. If we, brethren, be ourselves the redeemed children of God, such will be our aspirations too—that our adoration may be more humble, that our gratitude may be more ardent, that our obedience may be more entire, that thus we may approximate more towards the character of those, who perform this high service in the empire of immortality, and that at last we, too, may "give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

As to the duties which are owing to each other there are reciprocal obligations, extending throughout the whole of the family, and these obligations may be regarded as comprehended and summed up under this one noble impulse of love. Love is the great element of heaven, the affection of the angels and the spirits of the just towards each other, being pure, and ardent, subordinate only and always to their attachment to Him, who is their common Father. Nor do we doubt, brethren, that the angels and spirits of the just love the redeemed who are now on the earth. We are informed, that there "is joy in the presence of the angels, over one sinner that repenteth,"

and, they are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Here are manifestly the impulses and results of love. And from analogy, and other sources, we cannot doubt that there exists the same affection on the part of those, who once were saints below. And the saints who are below now, owe love to the angels and the spirits of the just, not, brethren, that we can practically serve them, or that we can practically advance their happiness, but that there ought to be, according to the law of our spiritual conformation, the going forth towards them of the impulses of kind and kindred regard.

That the saints who are below now owe love to each other, is one of the most oft repeated and emphatic directions of our religion. Remember you not how He, the elder Brother, on the night on which He was betrayed into the hands of men, and when about to offer His sacrifice, said to His disciples—"A new commandment give I unto you—that ye love one another." "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another?" And how often have disciples reiterated His language in His spirit? "Be kindly affectioned one to another, in brotherly love," "be ye followers of God as dear children, and walk in love." You, also, brethren, are taught of God that you should love one another. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." Here are some of the injunctions, under the pressure of which we are individually and collectively placed—injunctions to be fulfilled by all the manifestations Christianity has suggested, and which the state of our imperfect humanity may require or can afford. Here, then, brethren, let us remember, that in our special and peculiar sphere, we best honour our Father, as we most cordially love His children, and so do we most amply, in connection with personal perfection, become disciplined and prepared for that higher and glorious world, to which we must constantly look.

"Where joy like morning dew distills,
And all the air rejoices."

IV From this notice of the duties be-

longing to the family, let us proceed now to notice their privileges—the privileges of this family. We have already, from the statements we have made, indicated those privileges as numerous and eminent, and we now must enumerate them more distinctly. We do not now direct your attention to those privileges, which are enjoyed by the "family in heaven"—these will be noticed subsequently, we merely remark now, that they are made partakers of perfect and inviolable felicity, our attention is to be pointed towards the privileges possessed by the "family" of God yet dwelling "on the earth."

And we observe, first there is the privilege of instruction. As a wise parent administers instruction to his household in all matters which are right, and important for the welfare of those who compose it, so is it in the family, of which God himself is the Head. He administers instruction to His children upon all the great matters on which it is essential for them to be informed. Thus they are made to know what respects Him in His character, in His designs, and in His dispensations, and they are made to know the various truths, which are identified with their present peace and their final attainment of glory in their Father's house. The agent employed in the instruction of the family of God, is the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit has been promised in a peculiar and delightful manner, especially with regard to the illumination of the understanding. Thus when Christ was holding His last conversation with His disciples, He said to them, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things," and again, "when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come." We have from the Father, "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, that we may know what is the hope of our calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the

dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." We stand not then, brethren, at the vestibule of the temple, we are carried from apartment to apartment, until we are made to stand even before the innermost glories of the shrine. So is fulfilled the promise, "all Thy children shall be taught of the Lord!"

Again, there is also the privilege of communion—we mean, that the children have intercourse, fellowship or communion with God. They see not His glory, and they hear not His voice, but through His written Word, and through the ordinances and means of grace He has been pleased to appoint there is an interchange of mind—their minds go forth and ascend to Him, and His mind comes forth and descends to them. There is a special intercourse of mind between the children and the parent. Men of the world are accustomed to scoff at this as fanaticism, or to turn from it as mystery; but the Book of God presents it, and we well know how Christian experience answers to the Book of God. "We have boldness and access with confidence through the faith of Him." "We have access by one Spirit to the Father." "We have boldness to enter into the holiest of all through the new and living way, which the Saviour has opened for us through His flesh." "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." And what Christian knows not that this is the best blessing which the present imperfect state can by possibility permit? It is a cluster of grapes from Lebanon, it is a drink from the river of the water of life, it is a flower from the amaranthus garden of bliss, it is a ray from the celestial throne, it blends time with eternity, it mingles earth with heaven, it is "glory begun below."

And again, there is the privilege of discipline. God has placed in action a certain order of administration, which is intended for the subjugation of what in the character of His children, is impure and unholy, and also for the growing as-

simulation of their attributes and state to the moral purity and grandeur of His own likeness. Here, brethren, of course we refer to that order of administration which is comprehended under the title of afflictions—events which transpire in the course of our earthly probation, from time to time, and which, in themselves, are painful and distressing to endure. But how, it may be asked, can such an order of dispensations as these be numbered among our privileges? is it not a solecism, a contradiction in fact, as well as in terms? No, brethren, when we consider the design of our Father, in imposing this order of administration, and when we consider the results which invariably, under His grace, it must secure. If I speak to a child of God, a member of that great family, now suffering under the rod of paternal chastisement, let me remind that child of God of the great and important principles, which God in that administration is intending to accomplish. You remember, brethren, the incomparably beautiful statement made by the apostle of the Gentiles in the twelfth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, when addressing them as repining and rebellious under the dispensations of providence—the fifth and following verses; and let us all read or listen to these statements with the profound attention which they demand. "Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Child of God! art thou not satisfied and content? and will not the

language of the poet become truly and permanently thine?—

"'Tis my happiness below,
Not to live without the cross;
But the Saviour's power to know,
Sanctifying every loss.

Trials must and will befall;
But with humble faith to see
'Love' inscribed upon them all,
This is happiness to me.

God in Israel sows the seeds
Of affliction, pain and toil;
These spring up and choke the weeds,
Which would else o'erspread the soil.

Worldlings may escape the rod,
Find in earthly joys delight;
But the true born child of God,
Must not—would not if he might."

We thus speak of the privilege of discipline.

And yet, once more, there is the privilege of protection. Many, ingenious, and malignant are the enemies with which we are surrounded; constantly at work, in order to retard our progress, and to prevent our attainment of happiness. Against these, God has been pleased to provide an ample protection. He stands as by our side in times of conflict and peril, and says, "Fear not, for I am with you!" He protects us against sin; He permits not the "law in the members" to gain the victory over the "law of the mind." Sin "has no dominion over us." He makes us "free from sin, and servants unto righteousness, bringing forth fruit unto holiness, that the end may be everlasting life." He protects us against the world. The world in its blandishments and attractions is emasculated and paralysed—for "greater is He that is for us than he that is in the world." He protects us against Satan—his wiles and his fiery darts are alike impotent and harmless, and "the very God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly." He protects us against death. Death to us is no more the king of terrors. "The likeness of his kingly crown" is trampled upon; his sceptre is snapped asunder and fallen into the dust; and the child of God, in the last conflict with him, finds the laurel of triumph transferred to his own brow, even as he sinks and falls beneath the stroke, and in the last agony raises the song of triumph—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Here then, brethren, is protection. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

V. And now, brethren, we pass on to the consummation of this family. And the consummation we have to anticipate may be presented under two observations.

The whole family in heaven and earth is to be assembled together. We have already stated, that the children of God on earth, as they die, rise to, and enter into heaven; and it is a glorious thought, that with every moment of time, another and yet another child has been removed from the family on earth to the family in heaven. And at length, when the purposes of Divine mercy are complete, God will gather the whole vast multitude of those of whom He is the redeeming Parent, and present them in one throng before His own throne, and before the universe. The time when this shall arrive, will be the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. When He has accomplished the work of His mediation and intercession, He will come forth amidst the clouds in great glory, His holy angels and myriads of saints with Him; the bodies of those living on the earth shall be changed, and the bodies of those whose spirits have long since parted from them, and been lost in the dust of death, will at the sound of the trumpet be raised, again to become of these spirits, not the prison-houses, but the temples—not the dungeons, but the palaces—that, in perfect natures, they may unite with all of higher orders, and

be presented spotless before the Father. And, brethren, what a scene will be that! All the holy angels who kept their first estate, the patriarchs, the fathers of the Church, the prophets, whose lips were touched with a live coal from the altar, and foretold the things that were to come, "the goodly fellowship of the apostles," "the noble army of martyrs," the confessors, the reformers, the ministers, the missionaries and saints of every order and of every name, now complete in their purity and in their peace, all triumphant in the presence of Him who has summoned them to His throne! And what will be the complacency of the Father, when the eye of His Omniscience glances throughout the whole of that innumerable mass, and proclaims in the final triumph of His mercy—"Behold, all My children are here!"

And then, and more especially, the whole family will be united in the enjoyment of final and imperishable happiness. Happiness is now the portion of those who are redeemed; but we believe that there will be a vast accession to the happiness of the redeemed, at the resurrection day, when the entire nature of those who have dwelt on the earth, shall be presented before the Father, and when the angels shall behold the consummation of all the purposes which they desired, through successive ages, to look into and admire.

Not to dwell, brethren, on a subject which might occupy a very prolonged space of our time, let us speak of this final happiness, as originating in causes like the following. It will be the happiness arising from holiness. There will enter into heaven "nothing that defileth, or that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." They are like God in the purity of His own character; and as sin is always a source of misery, so holiness will be a well-spring of pleasure.

Again: it will be the happiness arising from mutual recognition and intercourse. As there is, undoubtedly, a recognition of our great Redeemer, there will also be a recognition of those with whom, while on earth, we have held sweet converse. Pastors and people are introduced as especial objects of this recognition and intercourse. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" And there are other

reasons, arising from scriptural authority, by which we might extend the same principle to all the redeemed, especially to those who have been united together in the fellowship of the saints, in close and personal union amid the relations of the present state; and this, doubtless, will be a source of high and exalted ecstasy and delight.

Again: it will be the happiness arising from the vision of God. We are to see God; we are to dwell before His throne; He himself is to be with us, and we are to be with Him; He, our God,—we, His people. And the sight of God in His splendour, must be an eternal sunlight to the soul.

Again: it will be the happiness arising from pure and dignified employments. The redeemed in heaven are to be engaged in occupations, qualified to bring out the full majesty and perfection of their intellectual and moral powers. They are to know God, as the result of meditation and study. They are to serve Him day and night in His temple; they are to praise Him in hallelujahs and anthems of praise, that are never to cease in their harmony, for ever. And who finds not here, in such employments, a fulness of joy?

And then, again and finally, it will be the happiness arising from the consciousness of security and of immortality. Were there a thought of change, or decay, or death, to breathe itself throughout the mansions of the redeemed, all the splendours would be dimmed, and the praises might be hushed well nigh into silence; but there is to be in every bosom the consciousness of immortality, the immortality of personal life, and immortality of all that constitutes heaven; and in this reflection that we and our privileges and possessions are all to endure for ever, here, brethren, will be found the final and triumphant ground of our bliss. Such, then, is the consummation of "the whole family in heaven and in earth."

Brethren, let me entreat your attention to the theme, which now, though imperfectly, has been presented before you. It is one which, under circumstances which many among you may without difficulty recognise, has been the source of much enjoyment to him who addresses you; and, perhaps, there are not a few among the children of God, who may be in circumstances also in which such con-

templations may be engaged in with pleasure and with gratitude. Here is the whole "family," of which God, in the agencies of His grace, is especially the Head. It is composed of beings in heaven—the angels, and "the spirits of just men made perfect;" and it is composed of beings on earth—men redeemed and renewed by Divine grace. There are various duties incumbent on those who compose this family—adoration, gratitude, and service as respects God, and love as respects each other. They are entitled, even while on earth, to valuable privileges: there is the privilege of instruction; there is the privilege of communion; there is the privilege of discipline; and the privilege of protection. And this family is at last to meet—one vast assembly before the Father; and in the presence of the Father is to inherit perfect and imperishable happiness. Let me request your attention, while this discourse is closed by these reflections.

1. Let us be grateful for having been introduced into this family. There is no position like that, brethren, which is occupied by us. From what evils are we relieved, to what blessings are we entitled, by being rendered "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus?" Nothing in the honours of earth can be compared to it. Wealth, nobility, fame, power,—all that nobles pant for in their mansions, or monarchs on their thrones—is but vanity and insignificance, compared with the position which has been vouchsafed to us. The poorest child of God who hears me to-day, is higher than the kings and the princes of the earth. We stand, as it were, on the very pinnacle of human nature, and are but "a little lower than the angels." What thanks, brethren, should we give to Him for His unspeakable gift! "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead—to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us."

2. Let us rejoice over those, who from "the family on earth," have gone to unite with the "family in heaven." Multitudes of men have already been transferred from the probationary, to the permanent state; and not a few of those who are present now, have had friends

once dear to them in the flesh and in the Lord, who have also made the step of transit, and are now before the throne on high. Your parents, your partners, your children, or your brothers are there. Remember, they are "not lost;" they have "gone before you," and now they are inheriting the Sabbath of peace and bliss. You sing the hymns of the sanctuary in the temple below; they are hymning them in the temple of immortality. Upraid not Him who has removed them. Let no momentary selfishness induce you to wish them back again to a less perfect state. Be content, and joyful, to know that they are living *there*; and hear a voice which seems to speak both from the tombs and their glory—"Be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience now inherit the promises."

3. And then, finally, let us anticipate the various events, through which we are to unite with the "family in heaven" ourselves. We are all brethren and sisters in Christ. We are all tending towards our home. Our march is constantly in rapid progress. Since we met in the sanctuary this morning, we have taken many a step on; and it may be, with regard to some who are in the presence of God, that they are near the crisis and the consummation of their immortal existence. You aged children of God, how we envy you, upon the brink of Jordan, and about to launch away! And those among us in younger or maturer life, in whom "the sentence of death" has, perhaps, been muttered but as a feeble whisper—we may be on the very verge, and about to make the passage for ourselves—let us welcome all that conducts us to it; afflictions, in whatever form; sickness, under whatever infirmities; death, under whatever mode. And when the last enemy rears himself before us, we shall find, that though he may come in harsh costume, and with a rugged accent, he can but administer to us one message—"Child of God, I am sent by thy Parent to summon thee to His home." How, then, shall we not welcome him, and tell him to strike, knowing, that "when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with

hands, eternal in the heavens?" It will be but the sigh, or, it may be, the convulsion and the agony of a moment, and then all is past, and the child of God has gone from the "family on earth," and is numbered with the "family in heaven."

And what, after such reflections, can be addressed to those among you, who have no participation in this delightful and inspiring theme? My hearers, unrenewed by Divine grace, and strangers to redeeming mercy, consider your position; you are as outcasts, and as orphans throughout the spiritual world. In Providence God has been your parent, and wisely and kindly has He tended you; but in the world of redemption you have no participation. There you are but as orphans. You may perhaps be careless, and insensible of your state; but can an orphan's unconsciousness diminish the severity of an orphan's loss? I remember once being deeply affected at a solemn service of interment, on observing a little child attempting carelessly to play with the tinsel that was glittering on her mother's coffin lid: was the child's unconsciousness a diminution of the severity of its loss? was it not an aggravation? And so, my hearers, with regard to you who are going on unconscious of your state of orphanage in the spiritual world. You will awake to the consciousness at last. May the Father grant that you may awake to it in timely repentance, and not too late, when the die shall be cast, and the doom shall be fixed, and from His throne, amidst the splendours of the last judgment, He shall hurl you far away into those regions of pain and horror, of which it is the great curse, that God is not the Father, but the Avenger and Judge.

"Be wise in time, 'tis madness to defer."

Come, and unite with us who have been made the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Believe in Him as your Redeemer, and all will be right, and then you shall pass with us and multitudes more, to join the family in heaven. I pray the Father, that not one in His presence this morning, may be estranged from the household of God, but that all, renewed by His grace, may meet at last in the "many mansions," which the Saviour already has prepared.

"WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?"

A SERMON, BY THE REV. JAMES PARSONS.

PREACHED AT SURREY CHAPEL, BLACKFRIARS ROAD, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
APRIL 27, 1845.

"Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me."—Exodus xxxii. 26.

MEN in different situations, my brethren, have been ready, in various ages of the progress of the world, even under the most favourable circumstances, to turn aside from God. Not seldom has it been, at when they appeared forward to acknowledge His claims, and disposed to obey His will, they speedily cast off their fear, and relapsed into ungodliness; "their goodness being as the morning cloud, and as the early dew," rolling rapidly away.

A signal example of this affecting fact is presented to us in connexion with the words we have now read. Only forty days had elapsed since the people of Israel had seen and heard the awful developments of the Divine Majesty upon the summit of Sinai, and since, under the impression which those developments had inspired, they had exclaimed to Moses, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do;" and yet, while it was transpiring, their minds were in a state of guilty alienation from Jehovah, and when it had transpired, they were found committing an act of impiety, as daring as they could perpetrate against His glory. To reclaim them, required not merely the expostulations of the prophet, whom He had appointed as their lawgiver, but the direct inflictions of His own judicial power. And here, brethren, is a type of other men, and of ourselves.

In presenting to your attention this evening the words of Moses, uttered on behalf of God at the gate of the camp, our intention is, not so much to illustrate the attendant fact as to the people of Israel, as it is to induce in those amongst you, who have not yet rendered to God what He has required, that entire decision on behalf of His service, which is claimed, and commended by such overwhelming reasons. And while this is our primary object, let those who already have yielded themselves to the Divine service, engage in earnest supplication, that their own minds may be rendered more devoted, and that the Word of Divine truth may be accompanied with grace from heaven.

Our purpose is, to notice the text in the following points of view. First, you will observe, the text implies an opposition; secondly, it advocates a duty; and thirdly, it demands a declaration. "Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me."

I. First, you observe, the text implies an opposition. The inquiry, "Who is on the Lord's side?"—implies the charge that some were *not* on the Lord's side.

And it was the fact, that at this period almost the whole nation had fallen into fatal apostacy. In what that apostacy consisted, will appear by a reference to the preceding part of the chapter. It was idolatry—the violation of the first two of the commandments, which they had heard in thunder, and which had been graven in stones by the finger of God. "When the people," (as we read at the commencement of the chapter,) "saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf; and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow is a feast to the Lord. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up

to play." It is supposed, that the image which was thus formed, was an imitation of what they had beheld in Egypt, as the object of adoration there; the people being easily seduced to it by an appetite for animal and sensual indulgence. But whatever may have been the origin of the particular image, the worship of it was, as Moses stated, a great sin: an act of opposition against God, which, especially under the circumstances, he could not view, but with disgust and indignant abhorrence.

Now, my hearers, opposition against God will be found the tendency and the habit of men in every age, and under every circumstance of the world. It is derived from the transgression of our first parents in the garden of Eden; the elements and principles of which have been transmitted to, and operating throughout every successive generation. Therefore we are told, that they are "shapen in sin, and brought forth in iniquity;" that they "go astray from the womb, speaking lies;" that they "depart from God, desiring not the knowledge of His ways;" that their minds are "enmity against Him;" that they "are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;" and that "they who are in the flesh, cannot please God." The worst manifestation of opposition against God is undoubtedly that which the Israelites perpetrated upon the occasion before us—idolatry—the worship of other objects instead of God: an apostacy, which sprang up in the infancy of the world, and has extended itself over many nations; and an apostacy, which even now holds a wide dominion, proving itself still the savage nurse and parent of every crime, and also of every folly. But not to dwell upon the guilt and the horrors of idolatry, we observe, that where it is not, the exhibitions of antagonism against the authority of God are yet most fatally to be found. We cannot take the survey of the country in which we live, observing closely its principles and its manners, without perceiving on every hand the signs of moral rebellion and of war. We see them in the infidelity, which treats Revelation as an imposture, which denies the God who is above, and which dismisses moral government with its laws and its sanctions, as being a fiction and a dream. We see them in the sensuality, which delivers over multitudes of men to the gross empire of animal lusts and passions, and which seeks to degrade an in-

telligent and immortal nature in approximation to the very brutes that perish. We see them in the Pharisaism, which while professing to acknowledge and honour God, repudiates and renounces the method of acceptance He has proclaimed, setting up instead the notion of human merit, as it may be found through ceremonies, through penances, or through works. We see them in the neglect of the "great salvation;" men living without a thought of duty or of safety, absorbing their care and their affections entirely within the limits of this transitory sphere, as though there were no immortality to anticipate, no hell to avoid, and no heaven to secure. It is thus, brethren, that whatever varieties may be found in the external forms and coverings of human feelings and habits, we perceive the existence of one wide pervading principle of depravity; nor can we doubt for a moment, that where Divine grace interferes not, there is presented the one terrible spectacle of a world in rebellion, a world in arms against its God.

The application which in this manner we make, must be considered as applying with solemn force to the assembly congregated here. There are those within these walls, and probably in no scanty numbers, who are existing precisely in the condition we have now endeavoured to describe. Many amongst you, indeed, have been wrought upon by the operation of Divine mercy, and by that mercy have been brought to rectitude and reconciliation; but how many are there, whose hearts are removed far away from God, and who are holding at this moment an opposition, which is depraved, impious and accursed! The infidel, perhaps, is here. Or the sensualist is here. Or the Pharisee is here. Or the neglecter of the "great salvation" and of eternal things, is here. Your own consciences, my hearers, are now accusingly testifying to your own guilt. And there is a voice louder than that of conscience—a voice unerring and Divine—which pronounces, "I know you, that you have not the love of God in you." "ye are yet in your sins;" "your hearts are not right in the sight of God." I would confront you, my hearers, with the existing guilt of your unconverted souls; and I would warn you of a period, and tell you to anticipate its approach, when the Lord will come forth to vindicate His honour, and when upon the creatures who have been guilty of continual rebel-

lion, He will exercise His own judicial majesty, by causing them to feel the weight of His vengeance in the inexorable torments of eternity. God will not "be mocked," sinner! Even now, His wrath is waxing hot; and if it kindle, and burst into a flame, it will burn to the lowest hell!

Here, then, is the opposition which is implied: the opposition of the carnal and unconverted mind against God.

We proceed to observe—

II. That the text advocates a duty. It is the duty of "being on the Lord's side."

Moses, you will observe by turning again to the narrative, felt indignant wrath against the people, on account of the apostacy which they had perpetrated; and by Divine direction He came down from the Mount, to terminate and to reverse it. His conduct upon this great occasion is graphically described. "Moses turned, and went down from the Mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear. And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the Mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." After expostulating then with Aaron, the grand instigator of the crime, he withdrew himself to a distance, at the gate of the camp, and exclaimed, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Here was a statement of their obligation, and here was a challenge to them to perform it.

Let us, my brethren, here amplify upon the theme which is suggested; explaining what it is to "be upon the Lord's side," and what are the inducements to "be upon the Lord's side."

Observe what it is to "be upon the Lord's side." And this inquiry is, of

course, to be explained and answered, not merely by the law of Moses, but by the Gospel of Christ; the whole revelation now combines into one, and the latter dispensation confirms and illustrates the former, affording a clearer instruction, and therefore possessing a stronger and a more imperative claim. Now to "be upon the Lord's side" is to acknowledge Him as the only Lord; the one Creator, Governor and Judge of the universe, possessed of all natural and moral perfections, alone entitled to adoration. To "be upon the Lord's side" is to render from the heart actually to Him emotions of reverence, of admiration and of gratitude, which are permanent and supreme. To "be upon the Lord's side" is to abandon and repudiate all refuges which are false, in connexion with the great principle of acceptance before Him, and to rest entirely and implicitly upon the one method which He has been pleased to propound, and which is found in the expiation and in the imputed righteousness of His Son. To "be upon the Lord's side" is to become practically conformed to His commandments; to strive earnestly and anxiously that the mind and the life may be assimilated to His character and to His will; habitual and constant aspirations ascending, that we may be "holy even as He is holy." To "be upon the Lord's side" is to be diligent in the advancement of His glory, lamenting over the transgressions of our fellow-men, and practically employing those means which He has adopted, for the purpose of securing the conquest and evangelisation of the world. This, my hearers, it is, to "be upon the Lord's side;" and nothing less than this. This is what we would be ourselves; and to this we would invoke you. You are to trample under foot whatever might prevent, or might subtract from this. You are to belong wholly to God. You are to give to Him whatever your intelligent nature can afford; you are to give it humbly, to give it cheerfully, to give it permanently. You are to choose His cause; to seek to be united to Him as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last. Nothing remains for you, without exception, but to comply; and happy, and only happy will you be, when it is the language of your hearts and souls—

"Thou art our mighty all, and we
Give our whole selves, O Lord, to Thee."

Again: you are to observe what are the inducements to "be upon the Lord's

side." Men are not invoked to abandon their opposition against God, and surrender themselves to His service, without abundant, adequate and overpowering reasons. These we shall endeavour with brevity and distinctness to state.

You should "be upon the Lord's side," because He possesses an unimpeachable and an absolute right to you. He has the right of a Creator. It was He, who gave you your wondrous construction in body and in spirit. He "made you, and not you yourselves;" you "are His offspring;" you "are the people of His hand, and the sheep of His pasture." "In Him you live, and move, and have your being."

"He smiles—you live; He frowns—you die;
You hang upon His word."

He has also, not merely the right of a Creator, but the right of a benefactor. He has provided you with many sources of enjoyment, applicable to the temporal sphere of your existence; and although He might justly have withdrawn from you all those enjoyments, in consequence of the guilt you have ventured to perpetrate against His authority and His tenderness, yet He has visited you with but few chastisements, and even now He is crowning your lives with loving-kindnesses and with tender mercies. Then also He has "remembered you in your low estate," because you were exposed to the wrath that is to come. In order to save you from that wrath, He has rendered His most precious and incomparable gift; He gave His own Son. He gave Him to be a babe in the man^u of Bethlehem; He gave Him to be a homeless and houseless wanderer among the mountains and in the deserts of Judea; He gave Him to agonise in the garden, when His very sweat "was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground;" He gave Him to the insults of the judgment-hall, and finally to the ignominious and excruciating death of Calvary, when on the accursed tree He bore in Himself the fire, which Justice had lighted up to desolate when Adam fell, which had run along the surface of the earth, finding fresh fuel in every folly and in every crime of man, and which, had it not been for the interposing power of His divinity, would have reduced the habitations of our race to ashes, and would have wrapped the universal world in flames. "Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins;" and we have

but to embrace Him, that the joys of immortality may be our own. Behold the right of God as a Creator and as a benefactor; it is entire, unimpeachable and absolute; and therefore you ought to "be upon the Lord's side."

Again: you should "be upon the Lord's side," because, by being so, you will be made partakers of vast and incomparable blessings. The Jews were informed, in the earliest stages of their history, that their allegiance to God would be associated with many and momentous benefits; and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has most amply and distinctly set before us the fact, that all things that man can desire as an intelligent and immortal being, are associated with decision for God. My brethren, it is undoubted and distinct in testimony, that when you "are upon the Lord's side," you receive at once all the blessings which your nature can possibly desire. Be "upon the Lord's side," and you will receive the pardon of your transgressions; the curse of the law will be cancelled; you will be accepted before God, and the imputation of the Saviour's righteousness will be with you, so that you shall live constantly under the cloudless sunshine of His favour. "Be upon the Lord's side," and you will be numbered with the family of God; He "will be your Father, and you will be His sons and His daughters," and you shall always possess the rich treasure of a Father's instruction, a Father's discipline, and a Father's love. Be "upon the Lord's side," and you will receive a secure and inviolable protection against all the powers that would harass or injure your souls; the world will not harm you, Satan will not harm you, death will not harm you; you will possess a glorious and a perfect triumph over them all. Be "upon the Lord's side," and when the brief course of the present probation shall be ended, you will ascend to higher regions, of which now you know not, except obscurely and indistinctly, the splendours; where you will be welcomed, though you deserve not, as "good and faithful servants;" where you will be clad in garments of light and majesty; where the spirit will be filled with the elements of buoyancy and rapture; and where, throughout a long and glorious eternity, you will inherit "fulness of joy, and pleasures that are for evermore." All this, brethren, is certain; it is as certain as infinite love, infinite faithfulness and

infinite power can render it. Now is there one, who is urging the infidel inquiry, "What is the Almighty that we should serve Him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?"—here is a triumphant answer indeed; and here is an inducement, which ought at once to master and controul all the powers and faculties of the soul. We are to enjoy vast and incomparable blessings, and therefore we ought to—"be upon the Lord's side."

Again: you should "be upon the Lord's side," because by not being so, you are exposed to overwhelming punishment and sorrow. You know well how the anger of God was kindled against the people, who had been guilty of the act of opposition recorded in this remarkable chapter. God had said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people; now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation;" and although at the intercession of His servant, His uttermost wrath was stayed, no less than three thousand were sacrificed on one day as examples, and afterwards we are told, "the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made." Upon other occasions in their history, they presented striking exemplifications of the fact, that guilt and opposition against God always meet His frown, and incur His displeasure. And, my hearers, are you so ignorant of the great and momentous truths of religion, as not to know that opposition against God must always terminate, if indulged, in punishment and in misery? A government like that of Jehovah, can only be sustained by the sanctions of rewards and punishments; and punishment is in equity necessary, in order to vindicate from dishonour the government which is opposed and insulted. Now, for those amongst you who are engaged in the course of opposition against Jehovah, however modified and varied it may be, let me distinctly and solemnly tell you this fact: that you must be strangers to the enjoyment of peace, that you must be surrounded with evils in time, and that you must constantly have impending over you darker and more fearful evils in the life which is yet to come. Those who remain in a state of opposition against God, have their bosoms constantly agitated by restless and perturbing passions, which can only move

in order to strike into the heart their more than scorpion sting. They are destitute of tranquillity of conscience; and conscience rouses oftentimes from its slumber, to speak to them in a voice of terror and of thunder. They have around them all the elements of the Divine displeasure: no pardon, no adoption into the Divine family, no protection from spiritual adversaries, no prospect of a life that is to come in grandeur and in immortal bliss. No; the curse is rolling upon them its sentence; wrath is gathering thicker and thicker with every day. In the prospect of death, there is no solace and there is no balm; beyond it there is "a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and of fiery indignation, that shall devour the adversary." And when the sinner at last becomes confronted before his Judge, that Judge is heard pronouncing to the ministering spirits of His vengeance—"Bring hither Mine enemies, that they may be slain before Me;" and at once they are consigned to the horrors of "the second death."

My hearers, if these statements as to the certainty of punishment arising from opposition against God be correct, what must be your own condition? I appeal to you: what must be your condition? Is not your opposition aggravated? Has it not been pursued in forms and in modes, to which, according to all principles of Divine legislation, special evil and aggravation must be attached? You sin against light and knowledge; you sin against repeated warnings of providence, and repeated privileges of grace. You have had invitation after invitation, warning after warning: "Your eyes have seen your teachers; and your ears have heard a word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." There has been an investigation, a wilfulness about your course of evil against your God, to which no possible palliation can for a single moment be applied. You, living in the very precincts of the Church, surrounded by invocations to "yield yourselves to God," and yet assuming the port of rebellion, and guilty of deeds and acts of blasphemy, at which doubtless higher beings shudder—what must be the doom, which you are constantly approaching in the life that is to come? My fellow-sinners, I tell you on the authority of this Book, and in the name of the God by whom it was given, that no common punishment in the worlds of immortality will be yours. No; "the worm that dieth not," will whet a

keener fang for you; "the fire that is unquenchable," will kindle a hotter flame for you; and "the blackness of darkness" will spread a broader, deeper and more funereal pall for you. "It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, Sodum and Gomorrah," than for you. "Who can dwell with" that "devouring fire?" "Who can dwell with" those "everlasting burnings?" Then, brethren, if opposition to God be exposing you constantly to overwhelming punishment and misery, you ought to "be upon the Lord's side."

My brethren, our statement upon this subject has been purposely one of the utmost simplicity. It has been requisite to explain what it is to "be on the Lord's side," and what are the inducements by which that decision should be urged. We cannot but trust, that simplicity will be power; and that, under Divine influence, there are some now, who are tending towards that grand decision, which will determine the interests of their immortal being.

Let us proceed, therefore, to observe—

III. That the text demands a declaration. "Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, 'Who is on the Lord's side?' let him come unto me." Those who, in the prevailing apostasy, had resolved that they would return, and number themselves among the servants of God, were to leave their ordinary stations and their ordinary habits, and go out to a distance, to "the gate of the camp," where Moses had taken his stand.

If you turn to the following chapter you will perceive, that upon an occasion somewhat similar, occurring immediately afterwards, the same course was pursued by the lawgiver of Israel. "Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of Congregation. And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp." There was a visible, open separation, by which it was practically declared, that they were resolved to "be upon the Lord's side."

We, my hearers, if we be "upon the Lord's side," are to declare it. God will not have His servants to live in secret and in retirement; they are to proclaim and publish the fact, that they are for Him. And in the days in which we live, when there are so many temptations

to compromise between the disciples of religion and the votaries of the world, it appears especially important, that those who are the children of God, should be urged with earnestness and constancy to the adoption of that publicity, by which alone their God can be honoured, and their own welfare effectually and adequately advanced. Let me, therefore, request your attention here to the modes in which the declaration of "being upon the Lord's side" ought really and generally to be made.

This declaration should be made by verbal announcement in the intercourse of social life: "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." You are to appear what you are. You are not to be ashamed of informing those with whom you are accustomed to come in contact in the ordinary affairs of society, that a grand change has passed upon your determinations and your habits, and that you have resolved to live unto God. You who are poor, you who are young, you who are in any wise dependent upon those who have assumed or possess the character of your worldly superiors, do not be afraid of announcing the great fact, that you are resolved to be the servants of God. And right and happy will be your existence, when throughout the whole range of domestic and social influence, you can announce in sincerity and in truth—I am "upon the Lord's side."

Again: this declaration is also to be made by union with the people of God in the Churches of His Son. The economy under which it is our privilege to live, has ordained, that those who "serve God with their spirit in the Gospel of His Son," should unite in communities, which are usually known under the title and by the appellation of Churches; their union with those communities being from time to time public and decisive testimony of their being devoted to His glory and His praise. You will remember, my brethren, that in the primitive ages the announcement of this fact is decided. When the three thousand "were pricked in their heart" upon the memorable day of Pentecost, they made a public declaration of their transition, by being joined to those who already were the avowed disciples of the Redeemer; and afterwards we are told, "the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." Other exemplifications of the same fact are given; nor will you forget, that the epistles of the inspired writers were al-

ways addressed to those, who were united in Church order for the purpose of advancing Christianity in the world. My brethren, I would, as a minister of the Gospel, press this obligation solemnly upon each and all of you, who, professing to have felt the power of religion in your own hearts, have nevertheless held back from that union with the people of God, which has been demanded. Much is lost by compromise, and by retirement; much is to be gained by publicity and by decision. There is a solemn law, a solemn obligation from your Master upon you, which it is not at your pleasure, nor within the power of your fellow-men, to obviate or to evade. You must, if you would act the part of those that would really and truly vindicate the honours of their God and Redeemer, unite yourselves thus with the Churches, which are created under the Gospel dispensation.

"Oh! may I see Thy tribes rejoice,
And aid their triumphs with my voice!
This is my glory, Lord, to be
Join'd to Thy saints, and near to Thee."

We entreat you, that you will thus render your influence and your example on the side, and in connexion with institutions, upon which, instrumentally, now finally depends the restoration of the world.

And again: this declaration also is to be made by active and devoted diligence in promoting the cause of God among the apostate and the rebellious of your race. There never was a time, brethren, since the days of the apostles, when so solemn a call was urged upon the servants of God to go forth "to His help against the mighty," by diligent, practical and constant exertion. You cannot look around you, without perceiving the manifestations of the fact. Look at your own country. Think of the errors in doctrine, which are now polluting—or attempting to pollute—the very fountains of truth. Look at the rank and almost universal ungodliness of the land: the crowd of crimes, which it cannot become the sanctuary, to present even in nominal catalogue and announcement. See, brethren, in other climes the vast and tremendous efforts of apostacy, to put down and to exclude God, as an alien, from the universe that He has made. Remember, at the same time, the facilities with which the servants of God are now invested, for going forth to the attack in this grand conflict of Armageddon, in order that that conflict may terminate in victory

to them, and in felicity to the souls of men. Can you read these, the signs of the times, of which but a rapid outline has been given, without perceiving, that if you "be upon the Lord's side," the Lord must be regarded as now lifting up and unfurling His banner, and planting it at the station where you must come, and around which you must gather, to follow its leadings, until its cause shall have universal victory and eternal dominion?

I ask especially in this matter the aid of the young for God. Nor, my brethren, can we but regard the young, of real Christianity, possessing the advantages of education and social influence and power, such as a generation or two since were utterly unknown, as under peculiar and most solemn obligations now to answer the appeal, in devoted and unreserved activity in the advancement of the Redeemer's glory. Young men especially—young men, so many of whom, are gathered within these walls to-night! upon you we would call to consecrate the fervour of your early days, and the energy of your early talents, in the service and for the glory of your Master. Be not seduced by worldly gain. Be not seduced by sensual pleasure. Be not seduced by profane literature and taste. Remember, that he gives his powers where those powers are most dignified and hallowed, who gives them to God and for the salvation of the souls of men. I believe, there is not one amongst us, who was enabled to dedicate his powers in early life to the service and glory of Him who reigns in heaven, and ought to reign on earth, whose only regret has not been, that the dedication was not made, far earlier, and that, being made, it has not been since more entire, devoted and unreserved. What we want is the agency that now has been asked.

And, my friends universally, you will remember, that we ought all to seek to be animated by the spirit of ardency, which burned in the bosom of our Redeemer until it consumed Him, and which is known to have kindled in the minds of the noblest men, that are canonised in the annals of religion. That spirit of ardency ought to exist amongst us now, blazing and burning like a vestal fire. It ought to animate alike the heart of youth and the head of age. It ought to burn brightly in the secret chamber, on the social altar and in the public assembly. It ought to know no interruption, and to suffer no decline, until the frame in which it has had its harbour,

shall by its very intensity be consumed for the sepulchre, and then itself be but transferred, with the ethereal and immortal spirit, to other worlds, where it will cause that spirit to stand as a burning seraph before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Brethren, it has been with some difficulty, and at some expence to our subject, that we have endeavoured to contract it within the limits of an ordinary discourse; and the preacher can but close it under an oppressive feeling of imperfection. There is a wide and guilty opposition against God; the materials of that opposition exist, and its examples are to be discovered, amongst all the unconverted here. Opposition, thus guilty, ought to be terminated; we ought to "be upon the Lord's side"—to be entirely surrendered to the great principles and precepts, which He has revealed as intended to be our own; and to this there are inducements, which no rightly thinking person could for a moment evade or reject. If we be decided for Him, our decision is to be declared: by verbal announcement in the intercourse of social life; by union with the people of God in the Churches of His Son; and by diligent and incessant labour for the advancement of His cause among the apostate and unconverted of our race. It is thus that we urge the duty of being wholly "upon the Lord's side."

"Who is upon the Lord's side?" This is the one question, with which our discourse, as it commenced, must terminate. "Who is upon the Lord's side?"

Hundreds of hearts beat the response, as hundreds of tongues might utter it to-night—"I am on the Lord's side!"

Christian! who have avowed your religion! let us only entreat you to "hold fast that you have, that no man take your crown." Be "valiant for the truth upon the earth." "Be faithful unto death," that you may "receive the crown of life." Under the consciousness of past compromises and cowardices, seek for the influence of the Divine Spirit, to make you such as apostles and confessors and martyrs were. And remember, that your honour is the highest, when most fully you carry the mark of your Master upon your brow, and when your entire existence is the proof of the verbal proclamation—"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

Who *will* be "upon the Lord's side?" You who have been avowedly hostile, you who have been apparently undecided, we ask you the one question—will you "be upon the Lord's side?" Will you not, when it is right? Will you not, when it shall lead you to happiness? Will you not, when it shall save you from the wrath that is to come? Who *will* be "upon the Lord's side?"

I put the question in intense and overwhelming eagerness, to every rank and to every class: *will* you be "upon the Lord's side?"

Who asks it? God. And if you refuse, remember that you refuse Him. *Who will* be "upon the Lord's side?"

Let this be the time of determination. Now, amid the holy excitement of the sanctuary, and under the sure impression of the truth, let this be the crisis, and this the moment of your resolve. "The altar is reared; the sacrifice is presented upon it; the priest, "the apostle and high priest of our profession," is standing by: approach, and pronounce the vow. Approach, and lay your hand upon that reeking victim; and by its all-precious blood, assume from this time the port and character of His servant, who offered it for your redemption.

"All that I am, and all I have,
Shall be for ever Thine."

My young friends, especially, answer the invocation. Children of pious parents! answer the invocation. Son! daughter! answer the invocation. Parental hearts are throbbing now; parental tears are flowing now; parental prayers are agonising now; parental hopes are enkindling now: will you not gratify them? Will you not gratify the Saviour who can, redeem, and honour the God who can save? *Will you not?* son! daughter!

It is impossible; surely it is impossible. And when, at "the gate of the camp," there stands One in the prophet's garb, uttering the prophet's invocation, "Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto Me:" surely multitudes, rushing multitudes are coming—are dedicated and are to be redeemed.

May the great God, whose Word in godly sincerity we have preached, shed down the mightiest influence of His Spirit, and constrain *all* to come; that in life and death we may be found "on His side!"

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, M.A.

PREDICATED AT CHRIST CHURCH, NEWGATE STREET, ON WEDNESDAY EVENING,
APRIL 30, 1845.

On behalf of the Church of England Sunday School Institute

"I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation."—Hebrews xiii. 22.

IN the material temple of Jerusalem, there was a great diversity and gradation of office: from the high priest at the altar down to the door keeper, to the "hewer of wood, and drawer of water" for the services and sacrifices of the sanctuary. In that spiritual temple, of which the material was the expressive shadow and type, there is a similar diversity and subordination of function: from the accredited "steward of God's mysteries," and shepherd of Christ's flock, to those so touchingly described in the Epistle for the evening, as "fellow helpers to the truth." Each in his position important, nay, essential; so that the head cannot say to the hands, "I have no need of you," nor the hands to the feet, "We have no need of you." And the lowly, devoted servant of Christ would rather, with the royal Psalmist, take "the door keeper's place, in the house of his God," than the chiefest seat in the tents of wickedness.

Among the "fellow helpers to the truth," there is no body more important, more needful in the Church of Christ, more auxiliary to the ministry of the Gospel, than that interesting body, to which I purpose more especially to address myself on the present occasion. And in so doing, I would bespeak your kind and devout attention in the language of the great apostle, when addressing his Hebrew brethren—"I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation."

Rather shall it be my endeavour, to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance," than to encroach upon your own appointed pastors' places, by instructing you, as I am assured you are instructed by them. I shall simply seek to remind you of their instruction, and to enforce it by "line upon line, and precept upon precept."

May the Spirit of God descend upon

all, through the blessed channel of His own holy Word; that "the dew," being upon us, those that "dwell beneath our shadow," may "revive as the corn, and grow as the vine," and be as "the tender grape."

"Suffer," then, "the word of exhortation."

I. We would remind you, brethren, in the outset, of the magnitude and momentousness of the holy task, to which you have consecrated yourselves in the sight of God. To think lightly of the work, would be to disqualify yourselves for the work. It would be to wither the right hand of your energy in this holy employment.

And can you look for abundant reapers, why you should think most seriously and solemnly of the undertaking? Take a child—a little child—one child; and look upon it but as the mere man of the world looks upon it, and what is it? But look at it as a Christian ought; and what mind can compute its worth? The stone that the unskilled eye may pass over as rough, and not worthy of regard, may arrest the eye of the skilful lapidary, and he may gather it up with all care and with all appreciation, because he discerns beneath the rough crust, the hidden diamond. And so it is here: in that casket of clay—in the form of a little child, there is enshrined a diamond, which if it be but burnished and polished by the grace of Christ, may hereafter shine for ever in the diadem that encircles His brows upon the throne of heaven, "What shall it profit a man, to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" But the soul of the child will be the soul of the "man;" and that child's soul is of the same worth as the soul of the mightiest monarch, in the sight of God it is the same, because its life-time is eternity. It is, in a

son, a finite infinite; for what has eternity annexed to it, has a kind of infinitude belonging to it.

But remember, each little child, placed beneath your kind care on the Sabbath morn, has been redeemed at the price of that blood, which is emphatically styled "the blood of God." Look at that little one in the light of Gethsemane and Calvary; and say, can you esteem it lightly or indifferently? But remember, too, "their angels do always behold the face of your Father, which is in heaven;" and therefore, "take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." If God needs angels down to minister to the lambs of the fold, what honour, and dignity, and privilege is it, that you should be fellow-workers with angels—fellow-workers with the hosts of heaven!

II. But suffer us to remind you further, of the high purpose and aim, that ought to be kept steadily in view in your interesting undertaking.

Except the aim be single, the whole work will be defective. Unless you aim high, you cannot expect the blessing of God; and therefore you cannot anticipate that success shall crown your labours. And what is the purpose of all Christian education, and pre-eminently of Sunday-school education? It is to train an immortal, and fallen, yet redeemed being, through grace, unto glory. Every child brought beneath your care, is to be regarded as dead in Adam, but as capable of being made alive in Christ; as "by nature a child of wrath," and heir of hell, but through the redemption that is in Christ, called to be a child of God, and an heir of heaven; nay, as sealed and signed in the visible covenant, to be "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." You are, therefore, to train and to teach, not professed heathens, but professed Christians; and to seek that they may know, as soon as they are able to understand, the solemn vow, promise, and profession, to which they are pledged and committed, and that they should be taught "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," and obedience to all the commandments of their Father in heaven. Thus indeed, with the covenant, of which baptism was the seal, stand fast, and be with them "an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," which shall be "all their salvation, and all their desire."

What a beautiful sight is a well-ordered, tranquil, hallowed Sabbath seminary, viewed in this light as a nursery for heaven! where those that name the name of Christ, and are to be regarded as solemnly dedicated to Christ, are brought together; that they may be taught to know Him whose name they bear, and learn to be His faithful soldiers and servants, fighting manfully under His banner, against sin, the world, and the devil, even to their lives' end.

No lower aim, then, should be kept in view by the Christian teacher in the Sunday-school, than that the child may be "in Christ a new creature, old things passing away and all things becoming new." Every thing short of this, is short of salvation; and every thing short of salvation, is short of heaven. It is well, that the child should be influenced morally, influenced socially, and be instructed so as to read with ease, and understand what is read: to have the mind stored with holy precepts, and with "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs;" but all this is but the means to the end. The end is, its renewal in the image of God; its acceptance in righteousness of Jesus; its meekness for "the inheritance of the saints in light." Ever keep this steady before the eye of your soul, my beloved "fellow-helpers," of the Church of Christ, in that tender, endearing task, to which the great Shepherd and Bishop of His Church hath called you: to seek for any lower end, is to compromise your fidelity to the Master, that hath sent you forth.

III. Suffer us to remind you, further, of the motives that ought to actuate the Christian Sunday-school teacher.

Need we do more than dwell upon two?—for there are but two, which may be said to absorb and comprehend all others. Love to the Saviour—love to the sinner.

Love to the Saviour—the spring of all cheerful, affectionate, acceptable obedience. Whatever is not of love, is not of Christ; for Christ is love. And the motive that must influence the Sunday-school teacher, the minister that worthy of the name, the Christian labourer in whatever portion of the vineyard he may occupy his post, is, that which has been from the beginning—"The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they which live, should

not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again." The love of Christ in an active, energetic, influential principle. It cannot lie dormant and dead in the soul where it is implanted by the Spirit; but it constrains at once him who is privileged to know its power, to ask—"What shall I render to the Lord, for all His benefits to me?" "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" And there can be no clearer or plainer reply, than that which our Master hath given—"Lovest thou me? Feed my lambs." The lowly, loving teacher in the Sunday-school can have no doubt or hesitancy as to his Master's acceptance and approval of the work, in which he is employed; for it is his Master that has bidden him feed the lambs of His flock.

And love to the Saviour will always be reflected in love to the sinner. Love is an expansive and enlarging affection. It is the very opposite to that selfishness, which absorbs and swallows up the soul of the unrenewed. Love to God manifests itself at once in love to our brethren; and we know that we love God, "because we love our brother." The practical test and touchstone of our professed love to our Master, is our actual and practical love to His brethren; so that "he that saith he loveth God whom he hath not seen, and loveth not his brother whom he hath seen," he is a deceiver, and he is a liar. Therefore, brethren, if you love your Saviour, you cannot but feel the bowels of your compassion yearn over the sinful sons of men; and more especially over those young, inexperienced, tender pilgrims in the wilderness of the world, who are exposed to great perils, whose very weakness so pathetically pleads for them, and who as yet, it may be said, are not so entirely absorbed, and enslaved, and entangled in a wicked world, but that there is hope that they may be happily brought out of its snares and its defilements, and lodged safely in the arms of that blessed Shepherd, who "gathereth the lambs with His arms, and carries them in His bosom, and gently leads those that are with young."

IV. Suffer me further, to remind you, my dear brethren, of the essential qualifications the Sunday-school teacher should have, and should seek continually to cultivate.

We have fore-stalled the first and the paramount qualification; for the remarks we have already made, assume that the Sunday-school teacher is possessed of personal godliness. Except there be personal godliness, how can a teacher teach? teach what he knows not, enforce what he values not, commend what he appreciates not! Will not the little one turn and say, "Physician, heal thyself?" It has been touchingly and thrillingly said, it is the example of the parent or the teacher, that educates the child. It is so; it is man's social influence upon his fellow men, that more than all beside, exercises the plastic power that moulds and models the young heart. As the wood-bine takes the shape and form of the tree or the rock round which it twines its tendrils, so do the young tendrils of the affections of the child shape themselves according to the example of the individual to whom they attach themselves in their clinging confidence of spirit. It is therefore, essential, that the life should be in harmony with the lips, and that "out of the abundance of the heart" the mouth should speak. See to it, then, that yourselves have first drunk of the fountain of life, and then may ye say "to them that are athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." "Examine yourselves," brethren, "prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobate?"

But next to the qualification of personal godliness, we conceive to be the qualification of a deep, clear, definite acquaintance with the scriptures of truth. If you are to teach, what are you to teach? Your fancies, your notions, your own theories and systems? Nay, brethren. You are to "speak as the oracles of God;" and if you so speak, you are speaking as firmly and as undoubtedly as even the authorized "ambassadors of Christ." In your measure and in your position, you need not fear to deal forth the simple bread of life; and the more simple, and the more unmingled, the better. You must be men essentially of one book. It is well, in such an institute as that you have formed, that you should glean extended information, and that you should get all that human writings may furnish, in order the better to qualify you for your work; but let none, or all human writings,

for a moment supersede in your minds and heart the simple word of God. Let it ever shine in the firmament of the church as the sun at noon-day—the stars all lost in its brightness. Keep to your Bible, and venture not one step beyond your Bible, in your instruction of the lambs of Christ's flock. Whatever you enforce, let the Bible enforce it; whatever you dissuade from, let the Bible give force to your dissuasion; whatever you inculcate, let the Bible give force to your inculcation; whatever you warn against, let the Bible give point, and power, and beauty to your warnings. Honour your God, and God will honour them that so honour Him.

Brethren, get clear and definite ideas on the Word of God. It is not an easy thing to teach a child; the man that thinks so, knows not what it is to teach. He who addresses you, has filled the honourable office you fill, and sat amid the little circle, and tried to teach them; and he can testify that to teach children well, is a more arduous task than it is to minister to the intelligent adult assemblage; for to come down to the little capacity of a child, and so to drop the waters of heavenly instruction through the narrow neck of the little vessel, that you do not choke the aperture, but allow them to enter drop by drop as God may graciously enable—this is indeed, as a most interesting, so a most difficult and nice task. Brethren, study therefore to have simple, clear, we would add, child-like notions and views of the Word of God; for except you receive the kingdom of God as a little child, you cannot enter into it; and the more we come to the simplicity of a child in our views of scripture, the more we shall come to "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The perfection of wisdom in Christ's school is to be a fool in the world's estimation, and a child in your own understanding and spirit. The simplest Christian will be the best teacher of the lambs of the flock; and he who can best accommodate his mind to theirs, will be the one who will enjoy, I believe, the greatest simplicity of faith, the greatest serenity of spirit himself, because he receives the kingdom of God as a little child.

A further qualification, essential to a Sunday School teacher, is great patience and tenderness of spirit. The work is indeed an interesting work; but it is

also in many respects a painful, self-denying, disappointing work. We are not to expect in any duty in this world, that we should be without thorns. We cannot but have the cross in whatever we do. The cross, therefore, must be taken up by the Sunday School teacher, when he enters on his endearing task; and he must bear it with meekness, and gentleness, and tenderness. Oh! how much may be done by patience—a patience that never wearies! a love that "beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things!" If that love is ever to be exercised with special unweariedness, ought it not to be in the service of these gentle lambs of the flock?—gentle they ought to be, but are not always, for, alas! we find, that like the wild ass's colt, the heart of a child has "foolishness" brou'd up with it, and would have its own perverse way, and will not yield to "the bit and the bridle" of wise and wholesome restraint. Therefore, brethren, whilst their tender years and their manifold infirmities claim for them especial patience, the perverseness and obstinacy of their dispositions will often make such patience most essential; and he who is not prepared to toil on in "patience of hope," "against hope" oftentimes, and whatever he may have to encounter, is scarce prepared for the beautiful office of a Sunday School teacher.

V. But we rather, brethren, hasten to remind you of some of the peculiarities, that should characterize your labour in the nursery of the Church.

In the outset, let me beseech you, that you evermore endeavour to love your work; and to conduct that work in such a spirit, as to gain the love of those over whom you watch. Love is the key to the heart of man. It is this, that must open it, fast locked and charmed as it is by Satan. God employs love, to open the gates, that the Saviour may enter in: "We love Him, because He first loved us." And it is by the manifestation of love, that we must hope to awaken love, even as it is so our Father awakens love in our own souls. Love your little charge with unfeignedness of heart. Let your bowels yearn towards them; and let there be individuality in your affection. Endeavour to twine your heart's best regards round each little one, and to feel for each in some sort as a father feels for his child. "My

little children," said one of old, "of whom I travail in birth until Christ be formed in you;" in your measure and degree; let the same holy spirit ever fill your hearts, as often as you gather your little circle around you, and let your look and let your lip testify to the affection, that yearns towards them in your inmost heart. You cannot counterfeit love; it must be there in genuineness, in order that it may be felt and realized. A child is a keen observer, and can soon detect whether the teacher feels it a listless and a loveless task, or whether it is an occupation cherished and delighted in, to train the little flock. Therefore, love them truly, and they will feel the truth of your love. Can you want motives to love them, whenever you view them, as we have reminded you over to do, as redeemed by your Saviour's blood, called by your Saviour's name, sealed to be your Saviour's disciples?

And next to this, brethren, ever pursue the work in a spirit of self-renunciation, in a spirit of dependence on the grace of God. Let the sense of your impotency ever remind you of the promises of Christ's sufficiency. While, on the one hand, you count your labours as "dung and dross," on the other hand, "doubt not, but earnestly believe" that the strength of Christ shall be perfected in your weakness, "and that He will use even the foolish things of the world, and the weak things of the world, and things that are despised, and things that are not," to accomplish His own purposes, "that no flesh may glory in his presence." These two twin feelings ought ever to be alive in your breast, as you wind your way, on the hallowed morn, to that endearing scene, where you are to sit amidst your little flock: self-renunciation—reliance on the promised grace of Christ.

But if so, then in the spirit of prayer ought the work over to be prosecuted. "Pray without ceasing." He will love his class best, and teach his class best, that prays most for his class. Give them a daily place in your prayers. Go from the closet to the Sunday School; and if you have opportunity, from the Sunday School to the closet. Plead for the little ones, one by one; bring each respective case before your Father, and strive in holy importunity, that the impenitent may be brought to repent, the inquiring may be led in the path of

peace, the tempted may be relieved, and the afflicted may be solaced. Plead for them individually, as well as collectively; it is far more endearing and effectual. Work in the spirit of prayer, and you will work in the spirit of God.

Let me further remind you brethren, that in the mode of instruction you must study to reach the conscience, awaken the reflective powers, and impress the heart. How much of Sunday School teaching has been day-school teaching on the holy day!—the mere dull task of teaching to read, teaching to spell, teaching to repeat. It is a drudgery unmeet for the sacred day; it belongs to the ordinary and secular school, it belongs not to that hallowed thing, a Sabbath Seminary. There they come to be taught to know; to understand, to feel "the truth as it is in Jesus." We would never have the Bible made the mere companion of the horn-book and the primer; it is to take it down from its heavenly pedestal, and put it on a level with things of the dust. We would have the mere power of reading taught by human means: and then we would have the holy Word of God entered upon as the trembling prophet entered upon the ground around the mystic bush, when he took off his shoes from his feet, for the ground whereon he stood was holy ground. So should the Bible be taught as the Bible, and heard as the voice of God to His creatures.

Brethren, we would therefore have you teach the Bible as the Word of God. And be not content with allowing the children to drag on; as a mere task, reading portion after portion, perhaps not understanding one sentence. A catechetical application of all that they read is the great secret means under God, of arresting the attention, arousing the reason, awakening the conscience, affecting the heart. It is impossible, humanly speaking, that any reading of the Word of God, but as a mere unintelligent creature might be taught to pronounce it, should affect the rational and responsible men. It must be the truth "by manifestation commended to the conscience" of the child, in the sight of God, that will toll under God, for its awakening to repentance, or its edification in faith. And, therefore, there is not a point, I conceive, of more vital moment in the fulfilment of a Sunday School teacher's task, than that he should

endeavour by all means to get the child to understand what it reads, to apply what it understands, to feel what it applies, to fulfil what it feels. Let all bear upon the springs of conduct, and tell upon the every-day walk and conversation. Without this there will be but the mere exercise of memory; the retention of sound, not of sense; the mere cultivation at best, of the intellect, but not the moral culture of the soul.

Christian brethren, let me further remind you, ever more to conduct the work with an humble expectation of success. Not that you are to presume upon success, or to be discouraged if it does not appear, or to suppose, that because there is no visible or immediate result, there shall be none. Nevertheless, you ought to expect, because God has promised, that "His Word shall not return unto Him void;" and unless the work is continued in a lowly spirit of cheerful hope and animation, "the hands will hang down," and the heart will wax faint. We are well assured, that no Sunday School can go on with that life, and energy, and determination, and sweet cheerfulness of spirit, which ought to characterize the scene, except there be a spirit of lowly hope inspiring the teacher's heart.

VI. Suffer us, brethren yet once more, to remind you of a few faithful and affectionate cautions in your work.

Beware of making the Sunday School other than the handmaid of the sanctuary, and the ministry, and the ordinances of God's holy Gospel. The grand instrumentality appointed by God for the setting forth his glory, and setting forward the salvation of sinners, is the ministry of His Word, with its accompanying ordinances. "It pleaseth God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." And as instrumentality that sets itself up in competition, much more in antagonism, to God's great ordinances will assuredly not have His blessing. You must be aware—the Sunday School teacher who has watched his own deceitful heart must be aware—that there is a tendency to magnify our own work, and see it through an exaggerated medium; and there can be no doubt, that in many instances the Sunday School has become paramount, in the mind of the Sunday School teacher, to the house of God and the ministry of His Word, and in some degree has rather proved a

hindrance than a help to the minister of Christ. Brethren, we would guard you affectionately and faithfully against such an evil. Ever let the Sunday School be what it was intended to be—as the child, the dutiful and affectionate, and obedient child of the church. What is it, but the nursery, where living plants are to be trained, in order to their springing up "in the houses of the Lord," and "fourishing in the courts of our God?" And it is beautiful, when there is the most perfect understanding and harmony between the pastor and the teachers; and when, instead of in any degree attempting to impede and hinder his work, they regard themselves as most honoured, and most honouring God, when they most effectually subserve and aid the work of Christ's ministers.

Suffer me further to caution you against allowing the Sunday School to become a snare to your own souls. It may be so. We, the ministers of Christ, must be well aware, that our own high office may become a snare to our own souls; and if in teaching others we forget ourselves,—if in our solicitude to bring others to heaven we should be ourselves neglecting to "press forward to the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus,"—if our own vineyard should become waste, whilst we are zealous, as we think, for the vineyard of Christ, alas for us! and woe to us! It may be so. And so the Sunday School teacher may be reading his Bible for his class, when he should be reading it for himself. He may be studying how best to speak to them and to question them, when he should be speaking to his own conscience, or rather listening to God speaking to his conscience, and should be catechising and examining his own conscience. Assuredly, the best way to continue to teach others, is to continue to be taught of God; and the best way to examine others, is to carry on self-examination in our own secret closet. I am aware that Sunday School teachers have sustained personal injury, even by their holy employment. Where will not Satan spread the snare? The serpent coiled in Paradise at the foot of the tree of knowledge; and he may coil in the sanctuary too, even around the very tree of life itself. Where will he not meet us? and where does he not tempt us? Christian brethren, "suffer the word of

exhortation." Let not that which, rightly used, may become the blessed means of personal growth in grace, prove, through unwatchfulness, a snare to your own soul's health.

Suffer us, further, to remind you of the importance of guarding against any 'root of bitterness,' that springing up, might distract or disturb the Sabbath seminary, and thus "many be defiled." Oh! how hard it is "for brethren to dwell together in unity;" and yet how blessed it is! "It is like the dew of Hermon, that descended upon the hill of Zion; like the precious ointment upon Aaron's head, that ran down upon the beard and even to the skirts of his garments." No where is it more beautiful, fragrant, and refreshing than in the little Sunday School scene. You may almost tell when you cross the threshold, whether the atmosphere is redolent of love; you may tell it by the harmony, and the sympathy, and the kindness, that are visible in the very countenances around. Dear brethren, "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" among yourselves. Let there be no little jealousies, no petty rivalries, not the strife who shall be first, and who shall be last—not who shall be ministered unto, but who shall minister. Like your Saviour, aim to be the servant of all. Then, indeed, will no stumbling-block be cast in their way; and, being "fellow-helpers to the truth;" and fellow-helpers to each other, the work of God will prosper in your hands.

VII. Let me remind you, once more, of the glorious consummation that awaits the faithful Sunday School teacher. If the minister of Christ who has been faithful to his office, and "has not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God," shall, in the great day say to his beloved children in the faith, "ye are my joy, and crown of rejoicing;" in their measure shall the teachers in our Sunday Schools share in the same blessed joy.

Who can contemplate the honour of being made the simple means in the hands of the Spirit of God, to sow the seed of eternal life in one immortal soul, without overwhelming emotions of awe, wonder, and adoration? Beloved brethren, such honour may be yours, through the grace of Christ. We have known many, very many who have dated their first abiding impression to the simple

teaching of the Sunday School class. And if I might add a motive more, you will find on earth too your sweet "recompense of reward." The unthought, unbribed affection of a poor man's child is a tribute not to be despised; and he that does not appreciate, the free, fresh love of the simplest heart, wants the finest feelings of the renewed nature. It is sweet to be loved for the truth's sake—to be loved for our own sake in Christ; and the Sunday School teacher often has that rich reward. There is one deeply interesting illustration of this feature in Sunday School teaching, that I cannot forbear mentioning to you for your own encouragement. It occurred in connexion with, I believe, the first Sunday School, or at least the first village Sunday School in this kingdom. That school was formed by a master manufacturer in the neighbourhood of the city of Gloucester. In that Sunday School there was a pious old man, that gathered the hamlet's little group upon the Sabbath day and read to them, and spoke to them about Christ, and asked them what they knew of Jesus. Years and years rolled on; and the master of that manufactory, in the vicissitudes of trade, became a bankrupt, and lost his all. In these circumstances he was one day passing through the street of a neighbouring town, when he was accosted by a disbanded soldier, whose eyes glistened, and whose face lighted up when he saw him. "How I rejoice to meet you again!" exclaimed the soldier. "I remember you not," the man in sorrow said. "But," said he, "I well remember you. I was taught in your Sunday School at Cherrington, and all that I have learned about my Saviour, I learned there; and it has been my guide, my joy, and my delight." "Ah!" said the man in trouble, "things are changed with me since then. I was rich then—I am poor now; or perhaps I ought to say, I was poor then—and I am rich now; I have lost my earthly all, but I trust I have found all in my Redeemer." "Say you so?" said the British Christian soldier; "I have just received a pension for services done in the army; I can work for myself—you cannot; you shall have my pension; I will pay it regularly while I live;" and that poor soldier pressed upon the friend of his youth all that he had bled for, and toiled for, in the service of his country. "Never before," said the gentleman, as

he told the simple story, "had I so fully known the force of the words 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days.'"

How sweet the first fruits that a Sunday School teacher may gather on earth! what will be the harvest, that he may hope to reap in heaven! what the joy and ecstasy, with which any to whom he has been, in his degree, a "fellow-helper" to their salvation, shall greet him and welcome him, when they appear in the temple "not made with hands," to keep the sabbath whose sun shall never go down!

Christian brethren, you have well done in forming your "Church of England Sunday School Institute." We are not to work as isolated bodies; we are to work as one body. And if it is to be so amongst various denominations of Christians, how much more in our own beloved Church! We are not to sectionize and congregationalize the Church of our land, but we are to regard the whole body as one, and to study the good of all. If there has been one deficiency, more than another, in the Church of England in later days, it has been the want of that large and general co-operation, and fellowship, and brotherly sympathy. Our Dissenting bodies have long had their Sunday School Unions; it is time the Church of England had her hallowed bond of fraternity amongst those who are engaged in the same holy work. I am persuaded, that, could such a system be carried out through the length and breadth of the land, it would wonderfully add to the life, the harmony, the energy of the whole machinery; and we should have too a most valuable auxiliary, to support the church, and the clergy of the church, in their

various endeavours to maintain the truth, to defend the truth in these days of peril, perplexity, rebuke, and blasphemy. Our Sunday School male teachers, especially, were they all banded together and prepared to act with unanimity and with co-tenancy, on any given occasion, would furnish a mighty engine of benefit and of defence for the church of our land.

Christian brethren, you have done well in forming this little Institution; and I rejoice, that it already has rallied around it more than four hundred of the Sunday School teachers of the metropolis. I trust, that year after year its numbers will still increase. And I am sure, your Christian brethren around you will, not with grudging hand or heart, give to maintain this infant Institution. They want a library of more extended character; they want means to carry out the machinery throughout the land; and if those Sunday School teachers, many of whom toil hard with the mind or the body through the week, are willing on the sabbath day to undergo the self-denying task and toil of teaching the lambs of the flock, it is a small thing for you, who may not be able so to glorify God, to give of your substance in their service, or rather in His service, for their succour and encouragement.

Brethren, by such motives we conjure you "freely to give," as you have "freely received." And may God bless the infant institution, and all who are engaged in the holy work of training up Christ's lambs: so that they and their interesting charge may meet with joy and not with grief, in the great day when the Shepherd and Bishop of souls shall come, to bring us all to account at His judgment seat.

ORIGIN OF PREACHING FROM TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

About the year 1203 began the custom of preaching from a text, but the sages and seniors of the university would by no means conform to this new method, but followed the old course according to the mandates of the fathers, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Bernard, and others who preached to the clergy and people by postillizing, i. e. expounding any particular chapter, after which way, St. Augustine without a text preached 400 sermons: at other times they preached in homilies.

If we refer to sacred scripture, we shall find that the practice of preaching from particular texts may be traced as far back as the time of Ezra, (Neh. viii. 8.) "They read, and caused the people to understand the law." So at ver. 12, it is recorded "they understood the words that were declared unto them." So also in Luke iv. 20, after reading the law, our Saviour returned the book to the priest, &c.

The custom of text preaching was interrupted for some time in the dark ages; and the ethics of Aristotle were read in many churches, even on Sundays, instead of the Holy Scriptures.

NOMINAL CHRISTIANS, THE OCCASION OF BLASPHEMY TO
THE HEATHEN.

A SERMON
BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW, ON TUESDAY EVENING,
MAY 1, 1845.

On behalf of the Episcopal Floating Church

"For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written."—Rom. ii. 24.

In the fifth commandment be "the first with promise," the third commandment is the first with threatening. In no point, if we may presume so to speak, is the Almighty so sensitive, as the honour of His great name. Hence His well beloved Son hath taught us in His perfect form of prayer, to offer up this as the master petition—"Hallowed be Thy name." And in no sin is God more provoked than in the sin that especially brings dishonour upon His name.

Hence it was that the Apostle addressed this charge, in bringing home conviction of guilt to the Jewish conscience, as the most aggravating charge of all, that the name of God was blasphemed, not by the Jews, but *through* the Jews, through their conduct and character among the unbelieving Gentiles, even as it is written in the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

We shall illustrate this charge, first in its application to Israel of old; then, in its application to our own nation; and thence we shall deduce our duty to our neglected seamen.

May the Spirit of God accompany His Word with His own living power to our hearts.

I. In illustrating the charge brought against Israel, it is essential that we should remember the relationship in which Israel stood to God. They stood in the relationship of His own chosen, peculiar, separate people, whom He had called forth from amidst the nations of the earth, in order that He might make them the lamp into which He would introduce all the light of revelation for a lost world; inasmuch that Israel became His covenant people, called by His name, circumcised in token of their being in union with Him. To them He committed His statutes, and His ordinances, and His lively oracles, and all the insti-

tutions of His holy worship, and all the laws of His Divine will. And hence this marvellous and great people, who had the Lord their God so nigh unto them, were known amidst the countries of the earth as the people of the Lord; and that people whose history was a chain of miracles, and whose government was a theocracy; that people who had so many legible inscriptions of the presence and the power of the Creator of all things upon them.

We must further consider their relationship to the world at large. They were, in reference to the world at large, as Goshen in the midst of the land of Egypt in the plague of darkness. Whilst the whole of the land was buried in "a darkness that might be felt," there was light in the dwellings and in the land where Israel abode. Such was the natural state in Egypt during that plague; and the spiritual and moral condition of Israel amidst the Gentiles was kindred. There was thick darkness among all the tribes of mankind, but on Mount Zion shone the lamp of the Lord with a feeble, but with a clear and blessed gleam, sufficient to guide every lowly wanderer to the coming Saviour, and through the coming Saviour, to heaven and to God. So that the whole earth borrowed what little light streaked its dark horizon from that solitary lamp lighted upon Zion; and just in proportion as that lamp cast forth its bright beams, was the moral darkness relieved, and the Gentile nations came to the brightness of the hope that was in Zion.

We must remember, further, that for a lengthened period the people of God were not what may be fairly styled acting on the aggressive. They were not as missionaries, even as under the Gospel dispensation, sent abroad to communicate their prophecies, their laws, and their ordinances to the Gentile lands; but

rather the people from afar, hearing the fame of what God had done for Israel; learning that "the great and lofty One" was in the midst of them, of a truth, came up to Jerusalem to enquire and to worship, even as the Ethiopian eunuch came. And many were the proselytes of the gate, and the proselytes of the outer court, that were led to join themselves to the people of the God of Israel.

But in process of time, partly because, perhaps, of their unfaithfulness in making manifest the truth that was committed to them, but chiefly in just vengeance upon their misuse and abuse of the light which they had enjoyed, God lifted up His hand to scatter them among the nations, and they were driven to and fro as chaff before the whirlwind, and scattered up and down amidst all nations; so that long ere their final dispersion at the destruction of Jerusalem, there was scarcely a known and explored spot in the world, were some of the wanderers of Zion where not to be found. And how did they go? They went still as the known and the noted people of the God of Israel. They went every where as those that were descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; those that were the offspring of the men before whom God made the ocean to cleave asunder, and made it a pathway before them, and for whom He rained down angels' food from heaven, and brought them water from the flinty rock, and drove out the nations before them, so that no man could stand in their presence, and planted them in their land, and gave them His marvellous ordinances, and their blessed institutions. They went every where thus, as the people who carried on their brow the inscription, "Consecrated to God—the God of the whole earth." And consequently the heathen could not but take knowledge of them, and regard them with deep curiosity and earnest attention, in order that they might trace in them the character of their faith, and the evidence of their peculiarity and their holiness.

And what was the consequence? Did they go every where heralds of the truth, every where patterns and beautiful exemplifications of the pure faith that God had imparted to them? Were they every where living witnesses to a living God? lifting up the voice of a silent but eloquent example, against the grovelling superstitions, and the loathsome abomi-

nations which the heathen had consecrated into religion, making devils their god, and nigres, dark as hell, their worship? Were the Israelites every where standing forth among the nations, as so many living witnesses of the folly and the madness of their brutal superstition, and of the purity, and of the pre-eminence, and of the transcendency of the true faith that had come down from heaven? So far from it, that when the heathen saw that their vices and their crimes were dark as their own, that they too were drivelling in superstition, and they too were unholy in spirit, and they too were hateful and hating in temper, and they, whilst they were puffed up with pride, because of their privileges, and the name that they bore, and their descent from Abraham, and their national relation to God, yet did but just turn their privileges into an occasion of greater iniquity, and did but feed their vanity with what ought to have caused them confusion and shame; then it came to pass that the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles through the people of God; and instead of bringing honour and glory to His name, and winning them to the true faith, they put a stumbling-block in the way of the simple enquirer after the true God; and they were rather hindrances than helps to those who would seek the way to Zion with their faces thitherward. And so it is that the prophet Ezekiel emphatically and fearfully describes their conduct, and the influence of their conduct, when they were scattered abroad, as we have it in the thirty-sixth chapter and the nineteenth and following verses. "I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they [the heathen] said to them, These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of His land. But I had pity for Mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went." Thus, as it was written, the name of God was blasphemed among the heathen through them. We know, that subsequently, when the heralds of the Gospel of peace went forth, according to their high com-

mission, among all nations, they found the Jews in every city and in every synagogue, blaspheming and opposing. They found them not the first to welcome Him, "of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," but the first to raise the Gentiles to opposition, and to stir them up to evil entreat the messengers of peace; inasmuch that the Apostles had to shake off the dust from their feet, and to say, "Seeing that ye reject the counsel of God against yourselves, behold, we turn to the Gentiles." And the Apostles had to encounter no obstacle or barrier in the progress of the truth that was more fatal and formidable than the dark misconduct, and the hateful spirit, and the proud unhallowed ungodliness of the scattered Israelites, that had their synagogues in almost every city to which the Apostles came. You see, therefore, brethren, how fearful and how clear is the application of this charge to Israel of old, that "the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles through them."

II. We turn then, on the other hand, and apply the charge, alas! to a fearful extent, to our own privileged and favoured land.

Were it asked of any man who has fairly and candidly weighed and considered the condition and state of the whole earth, what is that people that stands nearest in the condition of the ancient people of God, in modern times, and what is that land which most nearly resembles the land of promise, the "land flowing with milk and honey," "the glory of all lands," in the present day, he could scarcely hesitate to point out our own shores, and scarcely hesitate to point out our own people. If Israel of old stood in the relation of a covenant people to God; so have we: would to God we could say, that in integrity we still so stand! For if Israel were the accredited people of God, because they had his ordinances, because they were admitted, by his own appointed method of circumcision, into the bonds of the covenant, so is it with ourselves. We are baptized, as they were a circumcised people; and if all their rebellion, and all their inconsistency did not loose the bond of the covenant, but God spoke of them as His people, even when He declared that they were more senseless

than the ox, and more stupid than the ass; even when He declared unto them, "that as a cage was full of birds, so were they full of deceit;" if, I say, they still retained the awful name of the people of God, because they were His covenant people, is it not so with ourselves? However deeply we may belie and disgrace the name of Christians, that name is fastened upon us. We cannot perish as the unbaptized heathen perish; but if we perish, we must perish as bearing the name of Christ upon us; and there will be a depth of darkness in our damnation, as there will be a depth in our turpitude, as compared with the condemnation and the turpitude of the unbaptized heathen. It is so that we are in covenant with God; He has taken this great nation into peculiar and permanent union with His truth and with His faith; He has identified us with His cause; He has identified His great name with this land; and more especially since that glorious Reformation, which was vouchsafed by God pre-eminently to this favoured country, so that in no country under heaven was it carried out with so much wisdom and so much vigilance, and so much of primitive order and primitive purity. Nowhere did it leave a national covenant and a national church so complete, and so organized, and so fraught with truth, and with ordinances in harmony with the truth. Since that ever memorable and blessed period, what country has stood forth, as possessing the unclouded lamp of revelation, and as identified with the pure faith of the simple Gospel of Christ, like Britain! Has she not been the recognized and acknowledged protectress of the faith, and shield and shelter of the persecuted and the oppressed, whether by Antichrist, or by Pagan idolatry, through the whole length and breadth of the world? And have not other lands looked to her as their example, and sought to her for light and for holy knowledge? And have they not regarded her as, in some sort, the mother and the model of all the reformed churches in the length and breadth of the world; inasmuch that Britain has stood forth like Judah of old, the bright spot amidst a dark world, to whom God hath given a richness of privilege and a fulness of blessing, that no other land, in later times, hath known? She hath borne the honourable title of "the

land of Bibles;" and the Word of God, in our own vulgar tongue, has been disseminated from the palace to the hut; and every man might have that blessed guide to life eternal in his own hand, and in his own home, no man hindering, and no man forbidding.

And the parallel must be pursued still farther. God has brought the sons of Britain into contact with all the nations on the face of the world. As of old, the Jews were everywhere intermingled, though everywhere distinct, so has it come to pass with the children of our mother land. But there was a speciality and a distinction between us and the Jews, which is worthy of note. Israel's children were scattered by the sword and by the desolation. They were exiles and wanderers on the face of the earth—a people that had no home, and no country, and no resting-place. They were despised, and scorned, and cruelly entreated—the captive and the slave. But how different with us! Our sons are abroad over the face of the world, but not through the desolation of their native land—not through the sword of violence—not through the captivity of the tyrant; but through the richness of the blessing of God given to their mother land; so that her enterprising merchants visit every shore, her undaunted travellers explore every distant waste; her mariners are on every sea and in every haven—and over the whole world an Englishman's name and an Englishman's tongue is known, and constitutes a passport to him. And everywhere, too, our land has a mighty influence, and an empire so vast, that the sun never sets upon its limits. God hath given to her the ocean throne, and by giving to her the ocean throne, hath given her, in some sort, the sceptre of the world. One fourth of the whole family of earth acknowledges the sway of our queen, and the other three-fourths are more or less influenced, and mightily too, by our land.

Christian brethren, what ought to have been the results, and what ought to have been the blessed influence of such boundless empire—such unmeasured privileges—such unexampled influence? It ought to have been, that wherever Britain's sons went they should have carried the blessed banner of the truth; and wherever they, the professors of the reformed, pure Christianity

of apostles, and martyrs, and confessors, planted their feet, they should be recognized at once as witnesses for Christ, exhibiting the beauty of holiness, and by the powerful logic of *his* life, and the eloquence of the example, winning men to "the truth as it is in Jesus." Such ought to have been their influence, but has such been the result? Alas! alas! the charge brought against Israel, may with equal emphasis be brought against ourselves. The Gentile lands have watched our sons; they too have asked, "Where is the religion of this great people? and who is the God that they adore, that has done so great things for them? and what is that marvellous secret of their faith that has surrounded them with such unparalleled splendour? And what has been the result? They have said, "These are the people of the Lord, and have gone forth out of his land." "Here are your Christians; here are your specimens of purity, and devotion, and integrity, and holiness of spirit and of life." And alas! "the name of God hath been blasphemed among the Gentiles" through us. Our mariners above all, in every port, in every creek, on every sea, have been to a fearful extent, a circulating moral pestil. Their proverbial profaneness hath made them—what? Christian messengers of the pure faith and morality of the Gospel of our Lord? Nay; rather messengers of deep and darker immorality, than ever the heathen whom they mingled with; had practised or had known. They have propagated vices that even the brutality of paganism had never before had experience of.

And brethren, look at the history of our colonization—that black and blotched page in Britain's sullied history. What has been our colonization, but to a terrific extent, an annihilation of the tribes whose lands we have usurped, and whose homes we have invaded? And look at the consequences, in our attempts to rise to the high purposes for which God gave us our boundless empire; and our unmeasured privileges; look at the consequences, as telling upon our efforts for the evangelization of the world. They have been precisely akin to the consequences which accompanied the apostles in their primitive efforts for the same God-like purpose. Our missionaries, one and all, concur in telling us, that the most fatal and formidable obs-

tacle in the way of the reception of Christ's Gospel among the Gentiles, is the blasphemy occasioned to the name of our Redeemer, by those who bear it but to defile it, and who seldom or ever are heard to utter it, except in the profane imprecation and the oath; inasmuch that it has been doubted among some heathen, whether Englishmen had a God, and whether they adored Him; and when they have at last learned that they had a God, it was by a curse and not by a blessing; it was by the prayer for damnation, not the prayer for salvation.

And you are well aware, whose minds are interested, as we trust the minds of all assembled here are, in the glorious progress of Christ's kingdom upon earth, that until this great stumbling-block be removed, and this fearful impediment be uplifted, the gradual progress of divine truth must ever be retarded and clogged to an unimaginable extent; but that could we only have our manners, and our merchantmen, and our travellers, and our colonial settlers going forth as "living epistles, known and read of all" the heathen lands through which they pass, then indeed would there go forth from Britain's shore, a line unto the ends of the earth, and a voice, which even though silent, would be heard by every ear, as it would be understood by every mind, and come home to every heart; the voice of a godly life and conversation. For after all, it is not the truth simply in the abstract, nor the truth simply as proclaimed by the lip, that Christ employs in setting forward His kingdom, but the truth as incorporated with the soul—the truth as exemplified in the life. "Ye are the light of the world;" "ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" and if the light be put under a bushel, and concealed and hid, to what purpose was it lighted from on high? And therefore we have little expectation or hope, that Britain shall ever be very highly honoured as the ambassador of heaven and benefactress of earth, until Britain appear, as represented by her sons and daughters in heathen lands, as arrayed in the beauty of holiness, and exemplifying in her character what she inculcates by the lips of her heralds. "Physician, heal thyself," or as the heathen have accounted the missionary—

"Tell your own countrymen these things. Bid them not swear; bid them not drink; bid them not practice uncleanness; make them what you would have us to be, before you come to us." And in that most interesting spot of modern missionary triumph, New Zealand, they have learned, happily, to draw the vivid but the mortifying and disgraceful distinction, between the nominal and the real professor of Christ's faith; for when they now see the drunken and debauched, or hear the swearing Christian, they say—"There is a heathen Christian; he is no true Christian." Alas! what a multitude of "heathen Christians" have thus "given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme," and riveted the fetters of Satan round the souls of the sons of darkness, when they might have helped to strike off those fetters, and lead them into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God!"

Then, Christian brethren, if such be the application of this solemn charge against our own favoured land,—a land, the height of whose privileges will become the gauge of the depth of her downfall, if a downfall should ever be brought upon her aggravated and accumulated sins—for like Capernaum she has been lifted to heaven, and like Capernaum she will be cast down to hell, if she fall; if, I say, that fearful downfall come,—and there are not wanting signs amidst all her outward splendour, and commercial affluence, and boasted success, that the cloud is departing from her tabernacle, and that there is a canker-worm at the root of her prosperity, and that the tree is hollow at the heart, and that the whole is shaking, and if not finally subverted, shall be fearfully visited, and stripped, and destroyed; if her downfall should come, may not one of the most effectual occasions of that downfall be the blasphemy that she has brought upon the great and awful name of her God and Saviour, through the misconduct of her seamen, her merchants, her travellers, and her colonists? Then, brethren, it follows that there is not a more pressing or urgent claim upon Christian restitution, Christian justice as well as Christian sympathy and Christian zeal, than that every means, every appliance should be used, in simple confidence on the

blessing of God, for the amelioration and the spiritual improvement of the hardy sons of the ocean, that man for fleet, and carry our merchandise, and guard our shores, and place us under a deep personal debt of obligation to them.

Let me, then, press upon you their claims by a few simple suggestions that may remind you how strong and peculiar those claims are.

I have already noticed one—the depth of the obligation that we owe to our hardy mariners. But for them England would be but a little rock-bound island, narrowed up within her own resources; and what, comparatively speaking, would be her empire or her away? She owes to her fleets and to her seamen her ocean throne—her boundless commerce—her incalculable wealth—her wide ascendancy of influence. And are not those, then, though often despised and forgotten, who constitute the sinews of her strength and the means of her prosperity, deserving of her special maternal solicitude, and sympathy, and care? Are we not deeply indebted to those who quit their homes and their native shores, and who, exposed to peril, and to hardship, and to death, do the service of our country, wend our merchandise, convey our letters, bring to us the luxuries of other lands, or the comforts and conveniences, and form a medium of communication and of converse round the whole world? Here, then, is a clear claim that the mariners of England have upon the Christians of England; and that claim has been fearfully and sorely overlooked.

They have a further claim from the special privations under which they invariably labour. Far away from the sabbath-speaking bell and the sweet observances of English Sabbath (though, alas! so much scorned and so much desecrated,) they too frequently know not when the sabbath passes; and no house of prayer invites them to unite together in the sweet social song of praise and intercessory devotion, lifting up united hearts to heaven. Too often their leader and their commander cares not for their souls; and many a ship still leaves, as multitudes used to leave, our native land without one copy of the precious chart which is to guide them over life's stormy ocean, and direct them to the haven where no wave dis-

turbs! How many still leave, as untold multitudes have left our shores, without even a copy of the Word of God on board!

And remember, further, the special temptations that beset them, cooped up together, where a man that would keep his conscience clear, and fear his God, has no shelter or escape from the profane jest and from the bitter persecution and scorn, that will ever track the faithful follower of the Lamb, whether he serve Him in the ship's hold or in the village of his native land. Remember these things; and have they not a special claim? Do not they need from their own shore every moral influence and spiritual appliance, that happily, through grace, they may be established in faith, and strengthened in holiness, and enabled to live by faith on the Son of God, when far from the means of grace, and when bereft of every earthly prop and support, still "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might?"

Let me further plead for them because of that native and natural simplicity and integrity, though deeply tinged with superstition, which is their proverbial character. They are not, if we may venture so to speak, an ungodly race through want of conscience, but through want of light brought to bear upon their consciences. From the little experience that I have had of British sailors, I should say that there was no class, if they be well, and wisely, and gently, and kindly, and honestly approached, that have consciences more sensible of conviction, hearts more sensible of impression, or minds more accessible to the truth, than our hardy British tars. The very superstition that marks them, so that they fear an unknown God, as the Athenians did, who consecrated an altar thus in their ignorance,—the very superstition that often makes them the subject of ridicule and irony, indicates a dark feeling after God—a sense of some Supreme Being that to them, alas! is hid in clouds and darkness, because they know Him not as manifested in the face of His Son, who often was the mariner's companion, and his present help in the hour of his need, arising and saying to the wind and the waves, "Peace, be still; and there was a great calm." Oh! shall not that dark superstitionness be converted through the light of the Gospel

And the power of the Spirit, into the simple, intelligent faith that works best and strongest in the mind that is most honest, most upright, and sincere, and receives the kingdom of God as a little child? The credulousness and simplicity of the British mariner may prove a blessed and suitable soil to receive the incorruptible seed that is pregnant with eternal life.

Let me further plead their cause, brethren, by reminding you, too, of their more intense need, if we might so speak and make difference, of preparation to meet their God. Who that has passed the night in his berth, and heard the fluttering of the waters against the sides of the vessel, as he has laid in the stillness of the dark night, has not felt it come over his mind with a shuddering awe, that there was but a thin plank between him and eternity? But the poor mariner is ever, as it were, within a step of the bar of his God: though, indeed, by land or by sea we are equally in the hand of Him who letteth not a sparrow fall to the ground without His fiat; though it is true that we may be said to be equally near death, yet there is a sense, and there is a speciality, in which death is pre-eminently at hand, and ready to swallow up his prey upon the ocean, that may fairly entitle us to say of the mariner peculiarly that he knoweth not the day nor the hour when his Master cometh," and above all needs to be found ready. What multitudes has the ocean engulfed of our poor mariners, that have died in a moment, and have had the waves for their winding-sheet, and the depths of the ocean for their sepulchre, and had scarcely a moment in which to cry for the mercy of their God; and if that moment were given them, they knew not the God they should seek, or knew Him not in the only way of access whereby mercy can be manifested in harmony with justice and truth—through Jesus, the living way, whereby the guilty penitent may come in peace to God!

Then, beloved brethren, "suffer the word of exhortation" for ourselves. Shall we not be abased and humbled, individually and collectively, before God, for the sins of our country and the sins of our sailors? Many of us have relatives in other lands. Are they witnesses for Christ? Do they give occasion for the name of God to be blas-

phemed through them? How did we train them? How did we endeavour that they should become "apostles of Christ, known and read of all men?" The secrets of every family which has a child on other shores may be said, as it were, to be witness to the world; and that family is no longer private while its influence and its bearing tell upon the condition and destiny of multitudes at the ends of the earth. It is a solemn and a startling thought. Our land is so circumstanced and placed, that it cannot be but that she must tell, wherever her sons go, for good or for evil, to an untold and an unimagined extent.

Then, brethren, whilst our nation is trembling under the indications of divine displeasure, the foundations are out of course, the ordinary laws that have governed us are rending asunder, and there are not wanting sure signs that God hath a controversy with us, let us not cry, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we;" but let us cry out "Spare thy people. O God, and give not thy heritage to shame; wherefore should they say among the heathen, Where is now thy God?" And it may be that God will be jealous for his people; and that He will vindicate his own great name, and that he will at least preserve his faithful, to show that there is no unfaithfulness in God.

But we must, brethren, "bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" and in nothing are such fruits more demanded, than in deeper care and sympathy, and more earnest and importunate prayer on behalf of our neglected mariners, that they may not be a shame and reproach and a by-word in other lands; but that instead of the heathen saying tauntingly, "These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of His land," they shall at length say with other tone and with other meaning, "These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of His land," the messengers of good, and the examples of holiness.

Beloved brethren, I pray you therefore to give to our mariners more of your heart's sympathy, more of your secret closet intercession, more of your pecuniary means and liberalities. Here we bring before you a church for your seamen; a church, whither, I believe, they go up with joy. And the purpose is, to build them one on the shore, larger and more suited to their habits, for

they are a peculiar people, shy, yet proud; they must be conciliated, won in their own way, treated according to their own tastes and peculiar fancies. We must become "all things" to them, "if by any means we may win some, of them to Christ." And it is in support of that blessed effort, that we ask your generous aid. We ask it as a debt of justice, for we owe restitution to heathen lands, we owe restitution to our neglected mariners. We ask it, brethren, as a debt of justice and gratitude to your blessed Saviour, who would have these poor wanderers brought to the throne of grace. We ask it in justice to your own city. The great metropolis of this empire will not let this solitary place of worship for seamen, be labouring under a

debt of £100 undiminished. Brethren, cannot you spare from your abundance, if not, from your economical moderate income, or, better still, from that which by self-denial, you abstract from your comforts, for the glory of God,—can you not afford a mite on this occasion? We ask it in your country's name; we ask it in your Church's name; we ask it in your religion's name; we ask it in your Saviour's name.

And may God bless these lowly endeavours of His Church! And may he grant, that yet being merciful unto us and blessing us, and turning His face to shine upon us, so by our poor means may His way be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations.

INSCRIPTIONS IN CHURCHES

A remarkable colloquy between Queen Elizabeth and Dean Nowell at St Paul's Cathedral on the first of November, 1561, is said to have originated the usage of inscribing texts of Scripture in England on the corner side of the church walls, as we still see them in many parishes.

Her Majesty having attended worship "went straight to the vestry, and applying herself to the dean, thus she spoke to him."

Queen. Mr. Dean, how came it to pass that a new service book was placed on my cushion?

To which the dean answered.

Dean. May it please your Majesty, I caused it to be placed there.

Then said the Queen

Q. Wherefore did you so?

D. To present your Majesty with a new year's gift.

Q. You could never present me with a new one.

A. Why so, Madam?

Q. You know I have an aversion to idolry and pictures of this kind.

D. Whom as the b. Mary, may it please your majesty?

Q. In the east resembling angels and saints, nay, greater absurdities, pictures resembling the blessed Trinity.

D. I meant no harm nor did I think it would offend your Majesty when I intended it for a new year's gift.

Q. You must needs be ignorant then. Have you forgot our proclamation against images, pictures, and foolish tales in churches? Was it not read in your assembly?

D. It was read. But be your majesty assured, I meant no harm, when I caused the east to be bound with the service-book.

Q. You must needs be very ignorant, to do this after our prohibition of them.

D. It being my ignorance, your majesty may the better pardon me.

Q. I am sorry for it yet glad to hear it was your ignorance, rather than your opinion.

D. Be your majesty assured it was my ignorance.

Q. If so, Mr. Dean, God grant you his spirit, and more wisdom for the future.

D. Amen, I pray God.

Q. I pray, Mr. Dean, how came you by these pictures? Who engraved them?

D. I know not who engraved them, I bought them.

Q. From whom bought you them?

D. From a German.

Q. It is well it was from a stranger. Had it been any of our subjects, we should have questioned the matter. Pray let no more of these mistakes of this kind be committed within the churches of our realm for the future.

D. There shall not.

Mr. Nicholas, after inserting the preceding dialogue in "*Queen Elizabeth's progresses*" remarks—

"This matter occasioned all the clergy in and about London, and the churchwardens of each parish, to search their churches and chapels and caused them to wash out of the walls all paintings that seemed to be foolish and idolatrous, and in lieu thereof suitable texts, taken out of the Holy Scriptures, to be written."

Similar inscriptions had been previously adopted; the effect of the Queen's disapprobation of pictured representations was to increase the number of painted texts.

THE DRY BONES

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. THOMAS RAFFLES, D.D.

PREACHED AT THE POULTRY CHAPFL, ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, APRIL 30, 1845.

One of the Annual Sermons for the Baptist Missionary Society.

"And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live?"—Ezekiel xxxvii. 3.

Picture to yourselves an immense valley, which has once been the theatre of some mighty contest—a conflict in which thousands have fallen, as on the plains of Marathon or the field of Waterloo. There mouldering skeletons lie scattered in every direction around—parched by the summer's sun, and bleached by the winter's wind. It is a dreary and an awful scene—an immense graveyard—an extended sepulchre, pervaded by the silence and solitude of the tomb. Such was the scene to which the prophet, wrapt in the visions of the Almighty, was conducted; and under such appalling and impressive emblems was represented to him the melancholy condition of the Jewish people. In the midst of this dreary tale he was required for a while to wander, that he might have the more powerful impressions of the hopelessness of their condition, whose mouldering remains he was thus made to contemplate. And then, as his spirit sunk within him, oppressed by the affecting spectacle, a voice was heard—"Son of man, can these bones live?" To this appeal the prophet answered as best became him—"O Lord God, Thou knowest!" "To mere human agency the thing is utterly impossible, but all things are possible with God; and if it please Thee to impart the influence required, even this scene of desolation shall become the theatre of life, and a temple for Thy praise. And it was His pleasure that it should be so; and now the Divine command is given—"Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord," and to animate the prophet in the performance of this command the promise is vouchsafed, "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh

upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath into you, and ye shall live, and ye shall know that I am the Lord." And now mark the sequel. While the prophet fulfils his high commission, assured that He who gives the command and utters the promise is possessed of infinite power and faithfulness, and truth that cannot lie, a shaking is heard amongst the bones—the whole valley seems instinct with life and motion—bone is seen cleaving to its kindred bone, and limb to its fellow limb, and now the hideous skeletons are clothed with flesh, and every pulse begins to beat, and every breast to heave, and every eye to sparkle, and every face to beam with life and intelligence; and they start up from the long sleep of ages an exceeding great army, to celebrate their Deliverer's praise.

My brethren, the scene of the prophet's labour, the prophet's work, and the prophet's encouragement are ours. What is the world to us, what is it to the ministers of the Gospel, to the missionaries of the Cross, to the Christian philanthropist, but a valley of dry bones—a vast mausoleum, a frightful scene of moral desolation and of spiritual death? The bones are very many, and they are thickly scattered on the open valley, and they are very dry. And what is our duty there? What have we to do in this vast sepulchre, and with these immortal beings dead in trespasses and sins? Just to prophesy upon them, and to say unto them, "O dry bones, hear ye the Word of the Lord." "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life." And what is our encouragement? The very same that the prophet enjoyed; the power, the promise, the faithfulness of God.

Three things claim our attention. There is, first, the appeal; there is, secondly, the

command; there is, thirdly, the promise. To these three things let us now direct our attention.

1. There is first the appeal—"Son of man, can these bones live?" And why is this appeal? Was it not to arrest the prophet's attention, and deeply to rivet it on the melancholy, the degraded, the hopeless condition of those, who were to be the objects of his benevolent regard? And are we not justified, brethren, in using it for a similar purpose this day—"Can these bones live?"

Observe their condition: they are dead, there is no life in them. Not a limb stirs, not a bone moves, save as they are agitated by fitful gusts of wind, that ever and anon sweep across that dreary vale. There is nothing that indicates life, for all is cold and still and silent as the tomb. And such is the melancholy condition of the human race morally, spiritually, with regard to all that appertains to the knowledge and the fear, the love and the service, the worship and the favour of God, and the hopes, the interests, the destinies of the eternal world. The whole world lieth in wickedness; dead in trespasses and in sins. Oh! let us pause, then; let us ponder upon this enormous evil; let us survey the melancholy condition of depravity and guilt, in which our species is involved; let us trace it to its source, and estimate, if it be possible, the causes which contribute to its perpetuity and increase. It behoves us to do this, that in all our efforts for its mitigation and removal, we may act advisedly and with a distinct apprehension of the force and extent of the evil with which we have to grapple.

1. It is, then, in the first place, deeply rooted. Its seat and source are to be found in the malignant enmity of the human heart against God, and holiness. "Lo this have I found, that God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions." He came forth from the forming hand of his Creator pure and holy; and when his Maker beheld him, it was with infinite complacency, for He recognized His own image in the creature He had made, and pronounced it good. But where is that image now? Alas! it is utterly defaced; and in his apostasy from God and rebellion against Him, every noble disposition is eradicated from his heart, and nothing but the bitterest hate now burns and rankles there. "All flesh hath corrupted

its way" before God; and "the thoughts and the imaginations of the hearts of men are evil," they are "only evil, and that continually." So that "when the Lord looked down from heaven, to see if there was any that did understand, if there was any that did seek after God," he was constrained to bear this fearful testimony, "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." As it was in the days of Noah, so is it to the present hour; they are eating and drinking, buying and selling, rioting and revelling, marrying and being married, but "God is not in all their thoughts;" or if He be, it is only to degrade Him by the grossness of their conceptions, or to insult Him by their impiety and blasphemy.

Twice, brethren, in the history of the world, have men had the knowledge of God, and Divine revelation was universally enjoyed—at the creation, and immediately after the flood. But men "did not like to retain" that knowledge; it was too pure and holy for their corrupt imaginations and polluted minds; and therefore, they mingled it with a thousand follies and fables, a thousand corruptions and pollutions of their own, till scarcely a solitary trace of the original revelation remained. Hence all the monstrous conceits, the abominations, the obscene and execrable rites of paganism; hence the multiplication of their deities, till they swarmed like locusts; so rude in their forms, so base in their materials, that the meanest might make, or the poorest purchase them; while all that appertained to them, in many instances their very names and similitudes, and the worship and service presumed to be most acceptable, only indicated the deep depravity, the horrible pollution of the mind, whose false conceptions they but embodied and shadowed forth. Thus, "when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God; for they did not like to retain God in their knowledge; wherefore, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, and they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image, made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."

Does infidelity inquire, with a sneer of contempt, and a smile of imaginary tri-

umph, How it is, that this revelation, which you say came from God, and is equally designed for all, and equally important for all, should be confined to so few; how it is, that it has so limited a diffusion, that it is not possessed by every individual of the human race? Here is our answer to the question—here is our solution of the mystery: men had it, but they would not retain it—they had it, but they rejected it; they trampled it beneath their feet, because its representations of the Deity and its requirements were too pure and holy for their corrupt inclinations—so that their present destitution is at once their crime and their punishment. The cup of life was presented to them, but they refused to drink, and dashed it untasted from their lips.

2. In the second place, this melancholy state of things, the moral and spiritual degradation and death in which mankind are sunk, is perpetuated and maintained by the ignorance which universally prevails. There is a Church whose fundamental principle and favourite maxim it is—that Church which the British Government even at this moment are proposing to endow—that “ignorance is the mother of devotion;” but the history of all ages gives the lie to the sentiment; it proves that ignorance is the fruitful parent, and the fostering nurse of superstition and of crime. Hence, the entrance of light is the ruin of idolatry. Idolatry can only exist and flourish amid the darkness ignorance induces and perpetuates. There the phantoms and the fantasies of superstition are abroad; and men, scared and affrighted, are prepared to acknowledge and embrace any absurdities and follies, however monstrous and degrading. And such, of necessity, became the condition of the world when once Divine revelation was lost. They had cast from them the only torch that could shed a clear and steady light on the invisible realities of God and eternity; and no marvel, that thenceforth darkness, midnight darkness, a darkness that might be felt, overshadowed and enveloped them. They were wise indeed in their own conceits, but the light that was in them was darkness, and their very wisdom folly. They had their philosophers and their poets, and their moralists, it is true; and they had the stately firmaments above them, and the unfolded volume of nature around them—those “heavens which de-

clare the glory of God, and that firmament that sheweth His handywork;” and they had the revolution of the seasons, and the sweet interchange of day and night, and all those fixed and immutable laws of the natural world, in the steady operation of which, God has legibly written His eternal power and Godhead—but what of all this? In the midst of it all, “the world by wisdom knew not God.” They had indeed the impression of His being; they could not be utterly destitute of this in a world where every thing announced Him; they saw it in every object, and they heard it in every wind—painted in the rainbow, written in the sunbeam, muttered in the thunder, whispered in the breeze; but they had no accurate, or consistent, or certain impressions of the Divine character—they knew nothing of the high and infinite perfections of the Deity; they had no adequate conceptions of the spirituality of His essence, the purity of His nature, the equity of His government, the perfection of His law, the grace of His Gospel. They knew nothing of the relations in which they stood to Him, and the obligations and responsibilities connected with those relations, and the worship and the service, which in virtue of those relations He required at their hands; but every one conceived of the Deity according to his own inclinations, and picturing to his imagination the great Eternal, dipped his pencil in the element he loved. The warrior encumbered him with arms, the polluted defiled him with lusts, the revengeful dyed his garments in blood, the timid stood trembling at his thunder; and all professed to know something of the supreme Being, of whom none could speak with satisfaction or with certainty.

And such is the ignorance of God, that prevails to the present hour, wherever the light of revelation is unknown. *Ner* can it possibly be otherwise; for the light of nature has never been sufficient—not in a solitary instance, to pierce the darkness and to chase away the gloom. Oh! what conceptions of the Deity, think you, could the poor natives of the Islands of the Southern Sea have had, when the whole domestic pantheon of the king and his ancestors were packed up in a wooden box, sent to England, and I myself passed them through the Custom House in Liverpool; the whole collection being valued by the functionaries there at five

shillings of our money? But those, you say, were savages; they were rude and barbarous people. Be it so; but what conceptions of the Deity had Greece and Rome—Greece the instructress, Rome the mistress of the world—Greece and Rome in the meridian of their glory, in the zenith of their power—Greece with her Areopagus, and Rome with her Forum. What were their conceptions of the Deity, when in their mythology they numbered ten thousand gods, and paid to some of them a worship, to describe which would crimson every countenance, and harrow every bosom in this assembly, so that I dare not make the attempt? Indeed, as for idolatry, it is ever essentially the same. It is incapable of amelioration; it can know no cure. It must ever remain what it has been from the beginning; from the Moloch of the Ammonites, to the Juggernaut of the Hindoos—wherever the dark places of the earth are, there will be the temples of lust, and the habitations of cruelty.

3. Thirdly, this foul disease, this moral malady, assumes different forms, and puts forth an almost infinite variety of symptoms. It has forms of lust, forms of cruelty, forms of oppression, forms of acerbity—every form that can awaken pity, that can kindle shame, that can excite disgust; every thing that renders this earth, once the garden of the Lord, a vale of tears, an arena of conflict, an "aceldama, a field of blood." There, it assumes the form of lust and appetite and passion; and men revel in pollution and licentiousness, till the measure of their iniquity is full, and the patience of God is exhausted, and they sink beneath the influence of disease and premature decay, into the grave which their own vices have prepared. There, it assumes the form of slavery; and human beings torn from their country and their homes by the hand of violence and rapine, are doomed to perpetual bondage, bought and sold as goods and chattles in the market, and exposed to every species of indignity and wrong, till death, their best friend and only deliverer, comes at last to their relief, there, it assumes the form of war—no matter whether it be aggressive or defensive war, whether it be civil or foreign war, all has its origin in the deep depravity and desperate wickedness of the human heart. "Whence come wars, and fightings among you? come they not

hence, even of your own lusts that war in your members?" It is the thirst of conquest and the love of power, it is to dwell in palaces, and to sit on thrones—it is for these, that men will dare to trample on the rights of their fellow-men, and press through fields of carnage and seas of blood to the favourite objects of their ambition. There, it assumes the form of intemperance; and rational and intelligent beings, under the influence of intoxication, dethrone their reason, and sink beneath the level of the beasts that perish. 'Tis time would fail me to tell of violence and fraud; and of whoredom and adultery, of assassination and murder, and all the long black catalogue of crimes, that ride rampant through the earth, unrestrained in man's savage state, and in his civilised, scarcely kept down by the strong arm of the law, and the terror that prisons and gibbets inspire. Such is the world—it "lies in wickedness," like some fallen miserable being, wallowing in pollution, and weltering in blood.

4. Still further, to complete our impression of this melancholy state of things, observe, in the fourth place, that it is universal. The bones are "very many." They are many as the whole human race. "These bones are the whole house of Israel;" these bones are the entire population of the globe; "the whole world lieth in wickedness." In every portion of its territory, in every period of its history, in every tribe of its people, all are alike under the power of the wicked one. He is emphatically "the god of this world," and he ruleth in the children of disobedience with an universal and an unlimited sway. Over its fairest realms and its mightiest masses of population, he wields his hateful sceptre, and exercises his usurped dominion. The world is given into the hands of the wicked one, and sin and pollution and crime are the very elements in which they live, and move, and have their being. "They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." There is no exception; high and low, rich and poor, learned and illiterate, savage and civilised, bond and free, black and white, there is no difference, save in the forms which this wickedness assumes, and in the extent to which the hidden corruption of the heart is restrained or indulged.

Infidel philosophers talk largely of the

simplicity and purity and innocence of the untutored, unenlightened children of nature; but where are these sinless beings to be found, and where are the terrestrial Edens they inhabit? Shall we find them in Sumatra amongst the Pagans where these children of nature eat one another alive? Should we have found them in the islands of the Southern Sea prior to the introduction of the Gospel, where infanticide prevailed to such a fearful extent, that the population was fast dying away before it, and, in a very few years the race would have been extinct? Shall we find them in China? Oh! assuredly, it must be there; for it has been gravely asserted in a work entitled "Christianity as old as the creation," that "there is greater need that the Chinese should send missionaries to teach us the use and practice of natural theology, than that we should send missionaries to them, to instruct them, in the knowledge of revealed religion." But it seems from the accounts of the most respectable and intelligent travellers, that these plaudits are but ill-bestowed on the Chinese. From them we learn, that though careful with respect to the external deportment, apparently, modest and amiable, yet that sins of the most enormous kind are common amongst them. Drunkenness is not essentially a crime; chastity may be violated with impunity; a man may keep as many women as he can, and send his wife away as caprice or interest may dictate; while Montesquieu asserts, that the Chinese are the most destitute of common honesty of any people on the earth; a charge which is confirmed by Lord Anson, who in his Voyage informs us, that if a Chinaman is detected in a fraud, he calmly pleads the custom of the country. What admirable morality! Why has not infidelity, for infidelity boasts benevolence,—why has not infidelity been at some trouble and expense, to propagate a thing so excellent throughout the world? And what is Mahomedanism? And what are they who live under it? As might be expected from the religion under which they live: a religion, whose author was an impostor, a blasphemer and a murderer, and who, impelled by a spirit of boundless ambition, and insatiable lust of power, succeeded in forcing his impositions and forgeries on the world, not by the force of argument and the power of truth, but by fire and sword. The book

which he professes to have written by immediate inspiration of Heaven, is a combination of some fragments of truth with the grossest obscenities, the foulest blasphemies, the most glaring absurdities. Its morality is shamefully lax, its motives are infamous, and the heaven it promises to every true Mussulman, is nothing but a splendid seraglio. Such being the religion, what must be its votaries?

And what is Christendom as it is called? Do not infidelity and superstition divide the land among them? Look at the great cities on the Continent of Europe—what of God, and of the sanctity of His day, and of the simplicity and purity and spirituality of the New Testament worship, do they exhibit? Scarcely a solitary trace. The pictures, the statues, the relics and the shrines of saints, and forms and ceremonies, in many instances the most ridiculous and absurd, usurp the place, and are substituted for the worship of Him, whose eye is on the heart, and who, as a Spirit, must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. And what Sabbaths have they there? Let the fact that all their theatres are open on the Sabbath night—not to mention their gardens, boulevards, museums, salons, cafés, and every other form of dissipation and folly, be the melancholy but most conclusive answer.

And is Britain guiltless? In the great aggregate of their worst criminality, has my country no share? Ah! too much. By so much the greater is her criminality, as her light is clearer and more abundant than theirs. But look at our English Sabbaths. Are they the Sabbaths of the Lord? Such as He has ordained, and such as He delights to witness? How few, compared with the amount of the population, repair to the sanctuary, and worship Him there! How many spend the day in idleness, how many in travelling, how many in business, how many in frivolity and pleasure, how many in gluttony and drunkenness!—while the roads and rivers, and the lanes and fields are thronged, and every carriage is placed in requisition, and every beast is goaded to the utmost of its strength, in the service of these lovers of pleasure, and despisers of God. Oh! well might the Eternal arise in His wrath, and say—"Shall I not visit for these things? shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

Such, brethren, is the melancholy condition of the human race; such is the awful state of moral desolation and of spiritual death in which they are sunk. "But why tell us what we know? Why detain us so long in the contemplation of that, of which we are already sufficiently aware?" "We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lieth in wickedness." Alas! in this very acknowledgment lies the confession of our guilt. We know it, but we have not felt it as we ought, we have not deplored it as we ought, we have not laboured to remove it as we ought. The emotions we have cherished, the lamentations we have uttered, the efforts we have made, the contributions we have given, the prayers we have uttered, have not corresponded with the magnitude and enormity of the evil to be removed. We have sowed sparingly, and therefore the harvest has hitherto been scanty. No mountains of superstition and idolatry have yet been removed and cast into the sea; for our faith has not yet been even as a grain of mustard seed; and the prince of this world is not yet cast out, for the intensity of our desires and the importunity of our prayers, have never yet been adequate to so great a result. Brethren, will you bear with me, in the fidelity of these remarks? I know in whose audience I now speak; I am aware of the ground on which I now stand; nor is there aught which the profoundest respect could dictate, or the warmest affection inspire, to which I would not willingly give utterance on this occasion; but every other consideration in my mind, yields to the sense of my responsibility. Nor will I sacrifice this day even to the respect I bear you, that which belongs to duty and to truth. If, indeed, as a body, as an important and influential section of the Christian Church, possessed of wealth and talent and influence adequate to any enterprise of Christian benevolence, however vast, you are conscious that with all those facilities you have done your best, done your utmost, done what you could—if you are conscious that there remains to you no more to be done, nothing more to sacrifice, nothing more to attempt, then are you guiltless in this thing. No spot of your brother's blood is on your garments, no voice of it crying to God against you from the ground. But is it so? Is it so? Does conscience

pronounce a verdict of acquittal in this matter? Have you nothing to confess? Have you nothing to regret? Have you nothing to amend? Have you nothing to acknowledge? Oh! how much! You, I am persuaded, yourselves will be the first to make the acknowledgment—"We are verily guilty concerning our brother," in that we have seen his misery, and have not put forth efforts as vigorous as we ought, and as we might, for his relief. No section of the Christian Church can claim exemption from the charge; and all are, in this respect, in the same condemnation.

What, then, is our duty, with regard to the world's condition, but to rouse and shake ourselves from past indifference and sloth while we listen—

II. In the second place, to the Divine command. "And He said unto me, Son of man, prophecy upon these dry bones?" I need not occupy your time in reading the whole of the vision. You know it full well. I take it for granted, and speak as though I had read the whole. The duty, then, taught by this prophetic vision, is twofold; we must prophecy to the bones, and we must prophecy to the wind; that is, we must preach and we must pray.

I. First, then, it is our duty, knowing the condition of the world as it thus lies before us—to preach. This is but another form of uttering the great commission—"Go, teach all nations," evangelize all nations, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Brethren, the preaching of the Gospel is God's great instrument for the world's conversion. Other means He may have, and other kinds of instrumentality He may honour and bless, but they are all subordinate and auxiliary to this. It was the first sermon ever preached, after the outpouring of the Spirit from on high, that pricked in their hearts three thousand of the murderers of the Son of God, and to that amount, in one day, gathered around the table of the Lord those who, in derision and scorn, had thronged around His cross. It was this preaching of the Gospel, the preaching of the great doctrine of justification by faith, by that intrepid man Luther the monk, that smote the mother of harlots with so incurable a wound at the era of the Reformation—a wound which no time

shall heal, no ointment mollify, but whose anguish, indicated by her convulsive struggles, shall continue to increase, till the monster, blasted and withered by the breath of the Redeemer's mouth, and the brightness of His coming, shall utter one deep groan of agony, and expire. This it was that arrested a reckless world and aroused the slumbering Church, when, a little more than a century ago, George Whitfield and John Wesley commenced their noble career, and wrought a work, the beneficial results of which on either side of the Atlantic are felt to the present hour, and shall be enduring as eternity. This it was that won two hundred of the islands of the South Pacific, and Tahiti, fairest of them all, to Christ; and rendered them scenes of moral loveliness and beauty, on which the eyes of angels loved to dwell, until the tyrant came, like "the wild boar of the woods," cruel and savage, to devastate and to destroy, and, in the sight of the civilized world, and to the shame be it recorded of Britain chiefly, scattered their Churches, laid waste their pleasant things, and drove the outraged Christians from their sanctuaries and homes, to dens and caves, and rocks and deserts. Oh! yes, this is the instrumentality upon which God has set the seal of His approbation, which in the hand of the Spirit is irresistible—which no force of error can successfully withstand, and by means of which the world is destined to realize the grand consummation, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover this sea."

But then, brethren, it must be the Gospel that you preach. The Gospel and nothing else; the Gospel and nothing less; the Gospel and nothing more. It must be "the truth as it is in Jesus." "The whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Not philosophy, not morality, not civilization, but the Gospel; "the faithful saying, worthy of all acceptance," because it is so important and because it is so true, "that Christ Jesus came to save sinners;" that "God so loved the world, as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—the great doctrine of the atonement by the shedding of His precious blood, the great doctrine of justification by faith in His perfect righteousness, the work of the Holy Spirit in the constitution of the new creature, the formation of the character,

the regulation of the life—thus showing how the doctrines of grace are according to godliness, and the scheme of salvation which secures the whole of the glory to God, the most conducive to sound morality, and infallibly productive of universal holiness.

And while the direct result of the preaching of the Gospel, is the salvation of man, and this is the direct end at which we aim, still let it be remembered that civilization and science, and all the arts that adorn and embellish society, will most assuredly follow in its train. Never was it known since the world began, that a place was evangelized and not civilized; for the godliness we seek to propagate "hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." And hence it is, that the missionaries have ever been the most efficient agents, in the civilization of barbarous tribes, though this has never been the first and highest end at which their labours have been directed. "I go," said the late Sir Stamford Raffles on one occasion, writing to myself, "I go to make a country;" alluding to the semi-barbarous state in which some of the islands of the Southern Archipelago, to the government of which he was returning, were still found—"I go to make a country; send me a ship load of missionaries, for they are the men to do it; and I care not what denomination they belong to, if they are but good men, and will work." There is sound sense in that: "if they are but good men, and will work." So that, in truth, those very men, so much despised by the great and mighty, the philosophic and the erudite, those very men on whom statesmen and political economists have been accustomed to look down with suspicion or contempt, those very men who have been charged with turning the world upside down, and jeopardising the power and allegiance of distant colonies—these very men are demonstrated to be the best benefactors the world has ever known. Why, philosophers themselves, and men of science, are beginning to perceive and acknowledge the debt of gratitude they owe them for their labours, whose collateral benefits, and more remote results, have extended over to them, to correct or confirm their theories, and enlarge their stores of knowledge.

Nor is it by the preaching of the Gos-

pel alone, though by that chiefly, that you are to seek to fulfil the high commission with which you are entrusted. I apprehend that the word "prophecy," in the Old Testament, and assuredly its parallels "preach" and "teach" or "evangelize" in the New, gather within the scope of their meaning, whatever may conduce to the grand end proposed, namely, the conversion of men to God. The press, then, as well as the living voice, must be employed. There must be the pen of the translator, as well as the tongue of the preacher, and the sacred Scriptures faithfully rendered into the various tongues and dialects of the world's vast population, that men may read in their own tongues, in which they were born, the wonderful works of God. In this most important department of missionary labour, your society has been honoured to take the lead; nor is it possible on this occasion and in connection with this topic, not to pronounce with reverence the names of the illustrious trio, Carey, Marshman and Ward, men specially raised up by God, and eminently endowed by Him with a capacity for this great work: men who have been honoured, in no small degree, to revive the wonders of the day of Pentecost, without its miracles; and, by their pens and their press, to be to India and to China now, what, by their tongues, the primitive preachers were to the then known world.

Who that looks back to the period when the admirable Carey said, with a hallowed enthusiasm, such as in his calm and peaceful bosom must have been thrilling indeed—"I would give a million pounds sterling, if I had it, to see a Bengal Bible; O most merciful God, what an inestimable blessing it would be to these millions! Angels from heaven would look down on it, to fill their mouths with new praise and adoration;"—who that reverts to that period, and reads, in connection with it, the sum total of the languages and dialects into which the sacred Volume has been in whole or part translated, and the number of copies printed and circulated by these marvellous and indefatigable men—the languages and dialects forty-four, the copies 434,465, during a period of forty years ending April, 1843,—who, comparing these things, but must exclaim, with mingled admiration and wonder—"What hath God wrought!" "It is the Lord's

work," though by human instrumentality, "and it is marvellous in our eyes."

And while in the Eastern Indies God has put such signal honour on your missionaries in the great work of translation, He has vouchsafed similar tokens of His approbation to the faithful preaching of the Gospel in the islands of the West. When we consider the comparatively recent date of your mission to Western India, and that the total number of converts in 1841 was upwards of 35,000, with more than 19,000 inquirers after salvation, we are filled with awe, astonishment, and delight. In a remarkable manner did the poor negroes seem to be a people prepared of the Lord for the dispensation of mercy that awaited them; whilst in a manner no less remarkable, your missionaries were honoured to prepare them for the reception of that freedom, which without the influence of the Gospel, they had been unable really to appreciate and enjoy. And assuredly in the face of the civilized world, there needs no other proof, there can be no ampler demonstration, of the power of the Gospel and the faithfulness of those labourers, than the fact, that out of 300,000 oppressed slaves introduced in one day to equal rights and liberties, not a human being of that mass committed himself in any of those offences, which by many were so much dreaded and predicted. Well did Sir Lionel Smith, whose testimony I am now quoting, adduce the admirable conduct of the peasantry at such a crisis, as a ground of triumph to the cause of religion; and those who contributed to enlighten them in their moral duties, through persecution, insults and dangers, have deserved the regard and esteem of the good and of the just in all Christian countries.

2. But we must, secondly, pray; we must pray, as well as preach. We must "prophecy unto the winds," as well as unto the "dry bones." The prophesying to "the dry bones"—the preaching of the Gospel—were, but for this, a heartless effort, a hopeless task. To preach to the dead, to appeal to mouldering skeletons, to say, "dry bones, hear ye the Word of the Lord"—who that confers with flesh and blood only, and looks no further and higher than the scene before him, would ever embark in such an enterprise? But the "residue of

"the Spirit" is with God—that Spirit which brooded over the dark abyss, and made it pregnant, what time the morning stars sang together, exulting amid the splendours of the new-born universe; that Spirit, which can impart a principle of spiritual and eternal life to the "dead in trespasses and sins," and elevate man, sunk and degraded as he is, to the possession of that glorious image, and the enjoyment of that high communion, which he lost, and forfeited by his apostasy from God.

Here, then, is our confidence, this is our encouragement—the success in this great enterprise is "not by might, nor by" human "power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." That Spirit, it is the privilege, it is the prerogative of the prayer of faith, to command and to secure. Yes, to command! I know, that is bold language for mortals to employ; but we are warranted to do so. "Concerning My sons and concerning the work of My hand," saith God to His people, "command ye Me." Oh! have we yet availed ourselves of this privilege to its full extent? Have we ever used this prerogative in all its amplitude? Have we ever wrestled with God with a resolution that says, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me?" Have we ever besieged the throne of grace with a vehemence of importunity, a fixedness of purpose, a firm resolve inspired and sustained by a deep conviction that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Oh! if we had, would He not have opened the heavens, and poured down from on high such "showers of blessing," that long ere this "the wilderness would have become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field been counted for a forest."

Brethren, we are not "attainted in God, but we are straitened in our own bowels." "We have not, because we ask not." Henceforth, let us "ask, and we shall receive, and our joys shall be full."

That there are difficulties with which you have to struggle, we know full well. We have not been so long engaged in the missionary cause, without having learned, from the things we ourselves have suffered, to sympathize with others embarked in a similar enterprise. We know something of the natural perverseness and obduracy of the human heart; we know something of its deep malignity and de-

perate wickedness; we know something of its bitter enmity against God, and every pure and holy thing; we know something of the often terrific forms the enemy assumes in Pagan lands; we know something of the inveteracy of habits the practice of ages has confirmed; we know something of the power of caste, which no human effort has been able to any extent to break; we know something of the overweening self-conceit, and vanity, and pride of the Brahmins in India. I well remember a striking illustration of this, of which I myself was witness, when on one occasion I was honoured by the presence of that remarkable and most interesting and amiable person, the late Rammohun Roy, at my own table. In the course of conversation, he observed, to show the scorn, derision, and contempt with which the Brahmins hated the name of Jesus, he published his book, entitled "The Precepts of Jesus," and put it into their hands, requesting them to read it, and to say, whether in any of the systems with which they were acquainted, they had found precepts so pure, so benevolent, so sublime; and they confessed, that in no system which they had hitherto examined, had they met with precepts so pure, so benevolent, so sublime. "Can you, then," he said, "can you regard the Author of such precepts as a mean man, and treat Him with contempt?" "And did they," asked one of the company, "did they proceed to practice those precepts, the excellence of which they were thus compelled to acknowledge?" "Oh, no," said the Brahmin. "But had you proceeded farther," the querist rejoined, "you would have found in the same book principles, which, if received into the heart, would have endeared those precepts, and enforced their performance." "Ah! no," said the Brahmin, "I do not meddle with the doctrine." One then rose, and in a beautiful manner narrated the experience of the Moravian missionaries; how for years they laboured in vain inculcating the moral precepts of the Bible; when, suddenly, convinced they had hitherto pursued a wrong course, they began to preach the doctrines of the cross—the love of Christ in dying for sinners, and the infinite atonement accomplished by the shedding of His blood—immediately the most glorious results ensued,

and a work began in their conversions, which has continued to the present hour. The Brahmin sat in silence for a few moments, as if pondering the matter, and then replied; "Oh! that was good; but then you must not suppose that the same method which prevailed with the rude, the benighted, the barbarous Esquimaux, will succeed with the enlightened, the learned, the polished Brahmins in India." Oh! no, the doctrine of the cross is "foolishness" to them; the salvation by a crucified Redeemer, a dogma worthy only of their derision and contempt. But what are all the Brahmins of India to the Spirit of the living God? When it pleases Him to work, the scholar of Gamaliel and the taxgatherer of Jerusalem, the proud philosopher of Athens and the poor fishermen of Galilee, are alike. He can subdue the haughtiness of the one, He can soften the rudeness of the other; and of hearts hard and obdurate and unfeeling as the stones in the street, He can raise up children to Abraham, and form them meek and gentle followers of the Lamb.

Let our fears, then, be given to the winds; for while the scene of the prophet's labours, and the amount of the prophet's duty are ours, our encouragements are the very same that he enjoyed.

III. We have, in the third place, the promise, the power, and the faithfulness of God. "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." And while the prophet was faithful in the performance of his work, God was faithful in the performance of His. "And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said He unto me, Prophecy unto the wind; prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

And that which the prophet witnessed in the scene of his labour, shall be real-

ized with regard to the entire population of the globe. In that sublime sentiment, "attempt great things, and expect great things," arose your great and godlike Institution; and thence resulted all the labours of those devoted and extraordinary men, who have been honoured to give to the teeming millions of India the oracles of God; and you have a pledge of the perseverance, and success, and final triumph of the missionary enterprise, in the fact, that it had its origin, had its infant beginning, and is still carried on, in the spirit of prayer. True it is, we do not pray with the fervour, the constancy, the importunity, we ought; but still we do continue "instant in prayer;" and to the prayer of faith, nothing can be denied. We have the promise; nay, more, to confirm our faith, we have the oath of Deity. "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation," and the surest antidote to despondency, because "He could swear by no greater, He aware by Himself." "As I live, saith the Lord,"—by My own existence—"every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." "And hath He said it, and shall He not do it?" hath He spoken, and will He not bring it to pass? Is He man, that He should lie; or the son of man, that He should repent? Hath He set the seal of an oath to that which He has no purpose to fulfil? Perish the blasphemous idea. No; His faithfulness is equal to His benevolence, and His benevolence to His oath. All, all are infinite; and there is our security. "The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed;" these heavens may be wrapt together as a scroll, "and the elements may melt with fervent heat;" moons may cease to wax and wane, and suns may be plucked from their orbits; primeval chaos may return, and ruin drive her ploughshare once more over creation; but not one jot or tittle of all that God has spoken, shall ever fail.

Oh! what a scene for angels to behold with delight, and the great God to contemplate with satisfaction and complacency, will this accursed and polluted world present, when the word of this oath shall be fulfilled, and the purpose of which it is the seal be fully realized! Then all the scenes of social and commercial life shall be peopled with renovated beings,

and the intercourse that obtains between man and his fellow-man shall be influenced and pervaded by principles of purity, integrity, and peace. Then man shall love his brother, and every "root of bitterness" that has risen up to vex and exasperate shall be eradicated; wars and fightings, which come of men's lusts, will be unknown, and "the battle of the warrior with its confused noise and garments rolled in blood," shall be a tale of other times. Slavery under every form, of every name, in every aspect, shall flee away with execrations and curses, to that hell whence it arose; and the slave-ship and the pirate shall no more traverse the deep, nor die its waters with their victims' blood. Then each shall respect the rights and regard the interests of his fellow man, as though they were his own. The law of kindness shall be on every tongue, meekness and gentleness shall beam in every eye; every day shall be a Sabbath, every house a sanctuary, every heart an altar to Jehovah's praise. Far and wide shall the tree of life extend its branches, and cast its shadow; whilst the men of every dialect and every hue, from the purest white of Europe to the deepest jet of Africa, shall dwell under its shade, eat of its delicious fruit, and feel the virtue of its healing leaves.

But shall it ever be? Such a consummation as this is more than our feeble faith can realise. Its anticipation comes upon us with a vividness almost too intense to be endured. I am overwhelmed with its vastness—I am dazzled with its splendours.

Violence of glory, spare my aching sight,
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!

And yet it shall be so. It shall be so; for "the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." We may not live to see it; but our descendants shall; and we, if faithful unto death, from our thrones in glory shall behold it too. And then, oh! how we shall rejoice, if in any manner, if in any way we have been permitted to aid this glorious enterprise!

One moment more, and I have done. Ye men of wealth, and yet of piety, we make our appeal to you. We ask you not to impoverish yourselves in order to enrich the treasury of mercy, though He on whose behalf I plead, though He was rich, became poor for you; emptied Himself of all, that you might be rich. How much, suffer me to ask you, may you yet contribute beyond what you have already given, and still be far enough from this? All I ask is, that you will give according to the measure of your ability—according to the magnitude of the object, and according to your sense of obligation. When I last stood in this pulpit, and pleaded for a college then recently erected, some in anticipation of the appeal to be made brought their check books with them, and wrote down such sums as their impressions of the importance of the object at the moment dictated. Oh! could I but induce you this day to act upon that principle, what an abundant harvest should we reap! Then it was for a comparatively local institution that I pleaded—to-day it is for the world!

EFFECTS OF EXPEDIENCY.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that the same act by which the Jewish rulers hoped to save their place and nation, was the very cause for which the Lord sent the Roman army to destroy them. They crucified the Lord Jesus, according to the advice of Caiaphas, deeming it expedient rather to sacrifice Him, than endanger the public safety; and it was preventing the people believing in Jesus, and by putting Him to death, that they filled up the measure of their iniquities, and drew down the vengeance of the Lord, which ended in the total destruction of their city, the demolition of their temple, and their own dispersion. For nearly eighteen hundred years the Jews have been suffering under the fatal consequences of Caiaphas's advice; and they will remain in that outcast condition (yet withal miraculously preserved) until they shall "inhabit Jerusalem, their portion, in the Holy Land." At present they stand as a warning beacon to those rulers of nations, who allow motives of expediency and carnal policy to take the place of strict attention to the Word of God. The Bible should be the Christian statesman's polar-star; and woe be to our country if ever that fatal system of expediency, which already rears its head too high, becomes the ruling principle of government, and religion becomes of secondary importance, if not utterly excluded from her councils."—*Dalton's Commentary on John xi. 49—51.*

SPEECH

THE REV. HUGH McNEILE, M.A.

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, HELD AT EXETER HALL, ON TUESDAY MORNING, MAY 6, 1845.

My Lord Chichester, I have to second the Resolution. It runs as follows:—

"That the reports from the missionaries already engaged in the China Mission encourage the Society to make strenuous efforts without further delay to enlarge its operation in that interesting field of labour; yet so as not to weaken the existing Missions in other parts of the Heathen world."

Our immediate object brought before us in this Resolution, is China; and an opportunity is afforded us by the existing circumstances of the case, to try whether Protestantism be or be not indeed an expansive system. It has been said that it is not expansive; and this charge has been brought against it by controversialists and essayists, setting it in invidious contrast with the Romanist system, which is alleged to be expansive. When we claim for Protestantism as such, that is, for Reformed Christianity as such, an expansive character, we are met, and very fairly met, by historical recollections such as those presented to the Meeting by the Noble Lord (Glenelg), that for 200 years England, the great seat of Reformed Christianity in the world, was quiescent, as touching missionary labours. It is a fact; it is a reproach. But it is not, I think, in fairness, to be alleged against Protestantism as such, but against the abuse of it into which our country had fallen; when, as has been truly stated, the peculiar doctrines of primitive Christianity, and therefore the distinguishing doctrines of genuine Protestantism, had been lost sight of in the country. It was a period of stagnation; and I do not think that in fairness that period can be adduced as an argument against the claim of an expansive power in Protestantism as such. But, during that period the national spirit of Protestantism, considered as such, was grievously deteriorated; and of late years, when Protestantism, in its genuine aspect, has reappeared, it has been in individual exertion, and not in national revival. Our missionary Societies afford a reproach to our national supineness. Our Church, as a Church, has still been supine in the great work of Missions. Her lack of service is now being supplied by a few Societies, voluntarily constructed, and of which membership is constituted by the payment of an annual subscription. It is to these voluntary Societies, we are now to look for Protestantism; and are they not expansive? Does not the history of the

Church Missionary Society prove that Protestantism as such is an expansive system?

A fresh opportunity is afforded to put this still more powerfully to the test. China is opened. Can we expand so as to occupy that field? This is the immediate question suggested by the Resolution. Collateral topics have been introduced, and naturally enough. Our Report suggested them. We are informed in that Report, that while two messengers, rather than missionaries, of the Society, have gone to explore the land, the fact is, what might be possibly expected from another system, that several (I forget the number, but some large number) of the missionaries of that system have gone with full powers to enter upon their work. I ask myself, Why is it that in this great seat of reformed Christianity there has never been a college for the express purpose of preparing youths for preaching the Gospel among the heathen nations? Why is it, that England, that London, has not had her reformed Propaganda?—an establishment wherein young men should be instructed from their youth for the various departments of the work; and to which information derived from various parts of the world should be sent to the conductors of that seminary; and youths should be prepared with a knowledge of the habits of men in various parts of the world to which they are intended to be sent and a knowledge of the language of those various districts, so that upon any opening presenting itself, already there should be prepared a band of labourers to send forth? They have such preparations made at Rome. We are not afraid to put in contrast such arrangements as these. "The children of this world have ever been wiser in their generation than the children of light." In the use of means—I must confess it candidly, because I conscientiously believe it, and the truth demands it from us—I must confess that they put us to shame in the systematic use of means. But then is this any wonder? Is it any wonder, that those who depend for their entire success upon human means, whose hearts can scarcely deceive them so far as to induce them to suppose that God will bless such means, should be diligent in the prepara-

tion of those means? Except the means be adequate, they can expect no success. We expect success far beyond the apparent adequacy of our means, for we are using weak weapons, and depending upon a strong, though an unseen hand, to wield them. And I believe that this very feeling has been; however unintentionally, abused; and that, while we have recorded our constant dependence on God for a blessing on the means, we have insensibly slid into an abuse of that confidence, and have not given sufficient care and diligence and prudence and foresight to the preparation of the means on which we should ask that blessing.

But it is not too late. Means may still be used. Is it too late to have a Protestant Propaganda? Is it too late for the establishment of a college in this country, which shall be supported by the whole land, or or at least by the whole Christian people of the land? Is it too late for the establishment of such a seminary, of which our establishment at Islington shall be no more than a small, a very small commencement? Would it not be a worthy project to set forth before the Christian people of this land, in addition—I do not say instead—but in addition to all their other labours? They have wealth enough for more than all. They have enough for this in addition to all their Missionary Societies, and Bible Societies, and Pastoral-Aid Societies; and I must not forget one omitted in the enumeration to-day—the Society that looks after the people, on whom the eyes of the Lord are set from the beginning to the end of the year—the Jews' Society. Should they not address themselves to the preparation of a college on a large scale, the professors of which shall be charged with deriving information from various parts of the world—our missionaries are prepared in many parts to give it—and shall be charged with the education of young men sent there expressly for the purpose, and to be held in readiness to go forth when opportunities are offered?

But for this, we want something more than money. Where are we to get the boys that would be sent to such a college as this? I address myself to mothers; I see many before me. I address myself to sisters, whose affections, with their arms, entwine around their dear lovely little brothers, as they rise up around them. I ask those mothers and sisters, are they ready to send students to such a college, if the means are supplied to prepare the building, and suitable professors are waiting there to give Christian instruction, with a missionary direction?

Is there Christianity enough in our drawing-rooms; is there self-denial enough in our bosoms; is there devotedness to God enough amongst that interesting class now before us, to warrant us, in the expectation, that instead of feeling it to be a bereavement and a calamity to the family, that one of those dear boys should be exposed to the dangers of a missionary course, they would esteem it a high privilege, a source of humble thankfulness and of chastened joy in God, that their cherished boy, the centre of the home circle, the idol of his parents, should be engaged in the work for which Christ died? We cannot trench upon the parent's authority; we cannot send the press-gang, as it were, of a hierarchy after them, and gather them to a Propaganda, without leave of their parents, as, I believe, recruits are gathered elsewhere. No! We must appeal to the sympathies of our constituents; and these are our constituents. It is asked, why should our missionary Meetings be crowded by ladies? I say, why not? Where are we to get our missionaries, whence are we to supply our colleges, but from the sons dedicated to the service by pious Protestant mothers? Is it too late? I ask again. I trust not. We shall be perpetually in want of labourers, except some seminary at home be prepared for their instruction; except some large missionary institution be prepared, so that we may be ready to meet openings as they arise.

Much, however, has been said to-day, not only on the difficulties that stand in our way in meeting the demands from various parts of the world, but also on the duties incumbent upon this country, in our national and in our colonial aspects. I was much struck with that deeply interesting and truly philosophical address delivered by our rev. brother, Mr. Noel. I felt much what he said about the objects England should have in view in governing her vast Indian empire. I listened with deep attention to the principles he laid down, with regard to the manner in which England should discharge that duty. I cordially agreed in all his principles; that we should aim at bettering the condition in every respect of our Indian subjects, that we should treat them with justice, that we should treat them with kindness, that we should consider their infirmity; and I waited with anxiety to listen whether he would advance further, and say what he thought we should teach them,—whether he thought we should so far condescend to their infirmity as to allow them instruc-

tion in what they think right, but what we know to be wrong. I am thankful to say that he made no such proposals. I believe that his enlightened mind would shrink from any such plan. I believe that he thinks, and I am sure that I venture so to think, and I trust that many who are here equally think, that while it is our bounden duty to respect the opinions of others, and to deal fairly and honestly with their minds as well as with their property, and also our bounden duty to refrain from any attempt at coercion because we happen to have the stronger hand, it is at the same time our duty to refrain from the direct propagation of that which we know to be opposed to the Word of our God. I believe, that this principle, if fairly considered, will be found so simple, that no entanglement of political considerations ought to interfere with it. I believe there are many principles which ought to be interfered with; the peculiar circumstances of political connexion, the past history and past treatment of communities, the present population and present majorities, these things are such as ought in fairness to moderate, and change, and give a different aspect to a vast variety of principles. Every principle that is based on human policy, may be altered by the circumstances of human nations. But a principle that is based on the everlasting truth of the unchangeable God—a principle which involves all that is fair to Him, all that is honest to Him who has given us His revealed truth from heaven, a principle which involves all that is really kind to our fellow-creatures also, for it never can be really kind to teach them what we believe to be injurious—I believe a principle of this description, if fairly examined, will be found so simple, that all political considerations shall be kept clear of it. Let them modify as far as they have a right to modify, "let the potshards of the earth strive with the potshards of the earth;" but when they come against the rock of eternal Truth, let them beware. They can but ruin themselves by the recoil. Yes, I believe, that while we should all shrink with unfeigned horror from the base attempt of propagating truth by the sword, we should equally shrink from the unfaithfulness of propagating falsehood by the Treasury.

There is a very remarkable circumstance recorded in a part of the typical ritual which shadowed forth the vital doctrines and great principles of Christianity. We have habitually received the truth, that the leprosy of old was the type of sin. It had its seat in the blood, in

every case; but its symptoms on the skin were very various in various cases. There appears to have been no cure for it amongst the Jews by natural means. The helpless patient afflicted with that disease, was referred, not to the physician, but to the priest; and it would seem, by the exclamation of the king of Syria, when applied to by the king of Syria, for the healing of Naaman, his servant, that it was commonly understood that only God could cure that complaint—"Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?" On this, and other reasons that might be assigned, has been based the opinion, that the leprosy was a type of sin. Now, there is a very curious, interesting, and instructive fact connected with this subject, recorded in the book of Leviticus—that when a patient suffering from leprosy was brought to be examined by the typical priest, if the leprosy spots were scattered over him, leaving spaces of the flesh between, he was then to be pronounced unclean; but if the leprosy scurf had entirely covered his body, leaving no flesh between, then he was to be pronounced clean. This seems very strange; at first sight, it appears to be a contradiction, that the partial leper should be pronounced unclean, and the total leper pronounced clean. For the solution of this difficulty, I think it indispensable to consider the two-fold aspects in which sin is spoken of in Scripture, both as it is opposed in principle against the authority of God, and as it operates in practice to the contamination of man.

With reference to the first, the slightest spot of leprosy subjected the patient to examination. He was so far practically unclean, that he must not join the congregation until he had gone through certain instructions commanded by the priest. But with respect to the second, the liability to spread contamination, it is a matter of fact—it is referred to by some of our writers on the subject, and I believe is a known fact—when the leprosy was only partly on the body, contact with the flesh between the leprosy spots was infectious; but when the leprosy scurf pervaded the whole surface of the body, the absorbing vessels of another body would gather nothing from the dry scurf. There was no contamination, no infection, when the leprosy was total, but there was when it was partial. In reference, then, to this contaminating power upon the people, the partial leper was unclean; the total leper was clean. And this "is written for our learning."

It is true of systems, and it is true of individuals. It is true of individuals; as it will readily be seen, that a man wholly abandoned, without regard to the opinion of men, or to the Word and law and authority of God, who gives himself up to all the vileness of fleshly indulgence, and loses his standing in society, in so doing ceases to be a dangerous man. He can spread contamination no longer; he is too bad to be imitated. But a man who speaks fair, and does many things right, while at the same time he follows, and does, and in secret speaks many things wrong,—a man, who with the face and aspect of a friend, and with words "smooth as butter," has, nevertheless, a dagger in his heart, he is unclean. The barefaced villain, as touching infection, is clean; the hypocrite is unclean. And so of systems. Such a system as open Atheism, denying the very existence of a Supreme Being; such a system as Chartism, which some idle men attempted to impose upon the deluded people of our country a year or two ago; such a system as Socialism, which that unhappy man Owen attempted to make popular, and which is now scarcely heard of: these are, comparatively speaking, clean. They do not spread; they do not propagate mischief; they do not contaminate: they are too bad to be imitated. But a system which combines a profession of Divine truth, a respect nominally for the Word of God, a high respect for the Christian Church, a very high respect for the Christian Church, with the most disastrous mixture of false doctrine, of ingenious and subtle idolatry, so managed that it may, by falsification, be denied, while it is practically exhibited to the injury of millions; a system ranking in its creed all the great principles of Christianity, and then ranking after them all those vile abominations which neutralize Christianity, and debase it into an abomination to be abhorred by all faithful Christians—such a thing as that, is unclean. It is calculated to spread, it possesses the elements of contamination, because it has clean spots and it has leprous spots. Now I need not take the trouble to apply this.

But this I would say, that, if you wish to retain for your country and for your Society, such a character as makes it worth while to propagate what you hold, take care to maintain in it the simple unadulterated Christianity which the apostles preached, which they refused to

mingle; which the apostle Paul refused to allow any admixture of human tradition with, even though Barnabas dissembled, and Peter—Peter was carried away with dissimulation. Keep the fountain pure, or the streams cannot be pure. It behoves you to be watchful, at this time, of your missionary fountains. England you talk of as the missionary fountain, that is to send forth streams throughout the world. Oh! guard that fountain against the hand that would secretly poison it! Guard it as you value the millions to whom you would send the waters. Some one spoke of the waters of life today; let them be waters "of life." It is a deeply serious matter at this moment. The sinews of our missionary strength are threatened. The purity of our missionary fountains is threatened. At this moment our country is in peril, because of a variety of technical, and political, and historical and populatative difficulties, and contracts, and compacts, and promises, and breaches of promises. There is a tangled skein; and I venture to say, that no human power can disentangle it by human policy. It has been tangled and retangled, tied and retied, and wilfully tied, until the only way in which there is the least prospect of final peace and safety, is in declaring that God is over all, and God's Word shall not be forgotten.

Let the voice of missionary England proclaim this. Let the voice of praying England carry it before the throne of heaven, while we present it to her who sits on our throne; whom God preserves. We ask for her, that God would grant her to study "to preserve His people committed to her charge, in wealth and peace." But it does not stop there. The efforts of the nation seem to stop there. Masterly efforts are made for the wealth of the nation in all her industrial aspects; masterly efforts are made, and we thank God for them, for the peace of the nation and of the world, in all our foreign relations. "Wealth and peace." But, the prayer goes further; our Reformers went further; they knew better than to stop with "wealth and peace;" they knew, and they kept the best for the last,—they knew the true source of our national wealth, they knew the true source of our national peace. And they have invited us all to pray, that our Sovereign would study to preserve the people of God committed to her charge, in "wealth, peace, and godliness!"

CENTRAL ANTI-MAYNOOTH CONFERENCE.

The following letter from the Rev. Dr. Chalmers was read at the Anti-Maynooth Committee Meeting, which has been sitting for some time past at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, Strand, on Saturday last, May 3:—

"Edinburgh, April 26.

"Dear Sir Culling,—I have not been able to attend any of those demonstrations of Protestant feeling which are now taking place everywhere, both in England and Scotland, but I rejoice in the opportunity you have given me of stating how much I approve of them. You may well believe how one who estimates so highly as I do the power of a national endowment, and who has laboured for years to enlist that power on the side of a scriptural Church, or of a Church which acknowledges the paramount authority of the Bible as the alone rule of faith and practice—you may well understand the principle of my regret and alarm when this power changes sides, and passes from the support of that which is good, to the support or encouragement of that which I regard as diametrically its opposite, and therefore, hold to be essentially and most fearfully evil. Did the question turn on any theological nicety, and by which Parliament would be transformed into an arena of subtle and interminable controversies, I could understand how it is that our statesmen should refuse to entertain it, and so make the rule of a fleeting and short-lived expediency their all in all. But turning, as it does, on so broad and potent a generality as that—Whether the people of these realms are to be governed in the lessons of that Book which our rulers still profess, I should imagine, to be the Word of God; or be trained in such other lessons as may have emanated in former times from the human usurpers of a Divine authority, and which lessons might be still further vitiated and extended at pleasure by the successors of so tremendous an usurpation; if Parliament now professes their incompetency to decide upon that regarding which no difficulty was felt, and no indecision manifested by the Parliaments of other days, then the inference to my own mind appears unavoidable, that the Legislature which confesses its own incapacity to pronounce on the grand distinction between Popery and Protestantism, is unworthy of being trusted on any question which relates to that best and highest of all education, the education of principle. It is my earnest hope and prayer, that our Legislature may yet be saved from an exhibition at once so melancholy and so ruinous, and that by the noble exertions which you are now making, and which you have done so much to direct and stimulate, there might still be averted the greatest moral calamity which can befall our nation.

"But should you be defeated in your immediate object, let me hope that the friends of a pure and unadulterated religion will still keep together, and do their utmost to alleviate, and it may be, by the blessing of God, to neutralize the mischief that shall then have been perpetrated. To counterwork the evils of a State endowment on the side of error, let popular endowments be multiplied and extended on the side of truth. I am aware that the very term of an endowment is obnoxious to many. But it is not the term that we contend for, if we only had the thing. Our meaning is, that if money is henceforth to be given from the national treasury for the support of English colleges and churches, let Evangelical Christianity throughout all her denominations henceforth redouble her di-

ligence and liberality in the support of colleges and Churches consecrated to science and a sound literature, as well as to the pure theology of the Bible. Many wonder at the Free Church of Scotland, with her newly formed seminary of nigh 200 students, for the supply of ecclesiastical labourers to between 700 and 800 congregations, all upheld by contributions from the middle and working classes; for, with a few rare exceptions, the aristocracy are opposed to us. But they would cease to wonder if they but knew the mighty power of accumulated little when made to flow into a central treasury throughout the channels of a very simple, provided it be only a well-worked, organization. Let each of the great Protestant Communions, both in Scotland and England, have but such a treasury and such an organization; and call this an endowment or not, it will be at least an instrumentality by which possession might be taken of the great bulk and body of the people, and the national power, now put forth in the support of a degrading superstition, be effectually counteracted by the national will now aroused, and shortly, I trust, to be put forth in the like support of a scriptural and enlightened faith.

"You ask me if I think the friends of Protestantism are now on a right course of action, or if then be ought amiss in their proceedings? My only regret is, that their differences on the voluntary question should be suffered to operate with a distracting force or in the least to relax their cordial and vigorous co-operation against the endowment of Popery. My own views on the desirableness and the duty of Christian government to provide the institutes of a right Christian education, have long supplied me with an *argumentum a fortiori* against the Maynooth endowments, which, from the very first, I have regarded as wrong in principle and pernicious in operation. It seems to me strange that men will not act together in the support of every cause which they deem to be righteous and on which they think together. Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things. The matter on hand is, to put down, or if not, to lift our united protest against, what we all agree in holding to be a most pernicious evil; nor do I see the necessity or the wisdom, because of certain differences on other subjects, and which, in present circumstances, too, are wholly of an abstract and theoretical description, that we should therefore on this subject of pressing, and practical, and altogether paramount importance, fall out among ourselves. I am not aware, however, of this having taken place to any extent in London, as in some instances throughout the provinces. Let me hope better things of your great movement, and that, as the effect of it, the men of all communions who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, will come to know each other, and will join heart and hand in promoting that sacred cause of union among Protestants, which you, Sir, have so long and ably advocated, and the want of which has operated so grievously both to the reproach and hindrance of our common faith.

"I have the honour to be, my dear Sir Culling,

"Yours, with great esteem and regard,
"THOMAS CHALMERS"

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, M.A.

PREACHED AT EATON CHAPEL, EATON SQUARE, ON SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 4, 1845.

"For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."—Deuteronomy xxxii. 31.

THE land of Israel was noted for its lofty and diversified rocks. Swelling from the valleys, and abutting upon the hills, they formed, and still form, one of the most striking features in the landscape. They not only served to increase its boldness and its beauty, but they answered purposes of the highest good to the inhabitants of the country. The broad, flat rocks, that were buried beneath the soil, were often selected as the basis for their dwellings. The cliffs, that lifted up their heads to heaven, were oftentimes their natural fortress, wherein they took refuge, when their adversaries invaded their land. These rocks not unfrequently furnished them with shadow from the scorching mid-day sun; and from beneath them often sprang cooling streams of water; so that whilst they were shadowed by the rock from the heat, they slaked their thirst from the limpid streams that gushed from its foundation. It was no marvel, therefore, that the rock was often a chosen figure in sacred song. It was no marvel, that the beloved and enraptured prophet Isaiah foretold of Christ, that He should be "as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land;" that the son of Jesse so often celebrated God as "the Rock of his salvation;" and that Moses, the man of God, in his matchless song, which he indited to keep Israel in remembrance of the wonders their God had wrought for them, brought forth this beautiful figure in all its force and grandeur, when he exclaimed, contemplating what God had been to His chosen, and what the idols and false confidences of the heathen had been to them—"Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."

The God of Israel is the God of His saints in every age—"the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." What He was to those who believed on Him under the dimmer dispensation, He is still more emphatically to those who believe on Him

under the brighter. What they possessed in shadow and in figure, we possess in substance and in reality. The God of Israel is the God of our salvation. The words, therefore, admit of a simple and undoubted application to the Christian Church—to believers now.

We shall be led so to apply them; and, in the first place, to direct your attention to the contrast drawn between the rock of the world and the rock of the servant of God; and then, to show you the superiority of the one over the other, "our enemies themselves being judges."

May the Spirit of truth accompany the Word of truth with Divine light to our understanding, and Divine power to our hearts!

I. The "rock" of a man is that on which he builds his hope; that in which he seeks his safety; that in which he finds his rest; that from which he looks for his satisfaction and his pleasure.

The world has many "rocks;" but they are all distinguished by this one characteristic—they are "of the earth, earthy." They are in the world, and of the world; and with the world they terminate. Men set up for themselves various rocks. The rich man's stronghold is his wealth; the great man's confidence is his power; the self-righteous man's vain trust is his own fancied goodness. Men have rocks for their religious hope, as they have rocks for their earthly hope. They build, as they think, castles that will stand when eternity comes, as well as castles which are to shatter them in the brief chequered day of life. But all agree in this, that it is something other than God, something short of God, on which they repose. God is not Himself the Rock of their confidence. They look not to Him for the portion of their souls, the joy of their hearts. If in trouble, they turn to the creature; if sighing for satisfaction, they look to the "broken cisterns" they

have hewn from the rocks of earthly good; if wearied, and pained, and disappointed, they fly to some fresh rock of earthly good; but they are never led to cry—"Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." They are still, however they move to and fro, seeking rest, yet in reality finding none. To "the rock whence they were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence they were digged," they have not respect. God, their Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, is left out, in all their schemes of happiness, and in all their anticipations of future good.

But it is not with those whom God hath taught. He hath taught them, as the first fundamental lesson in the school of true wisdom, that their souls need an infinite portion, in order that they may be filled with good. He has taught them, that that infinite portion was originally himself, but that they lost that portion when they fell from their God. He has taught them, that in themselves and of themselves, they are "poor, and blind, and miserable, and wretched, and naked." They have no righteousness, in which to appear before His pure eyes; they have no strength, in which they may confide in the day of their necessity; they have no means in themselves to provide either against life's vicissitudes, or eternity's disclosures. They are brought by the teaching of His Gospel, and the light of His Spirit, to know themselves as without foundation, without solid rest, without abiding happiness; and these are led thus to recognise and realise the blessedness of the salvation, that "the Gospel of the grace of God" unfolds, wherein there is "a sure foundation stone, elect, precious," revealed as laid by infinite mercy, in union with infinite justice, truth and faithfulness, for the sinful sons of men to build thereon their peace, their hope, their everlasting security. This gracious Rock of salvation is made known to every one, that is taught and led by the Spirit of God; inasmuch that He has declared, "Every one that heareth and learneth of the Father, cometh unto Me;" and he that hath so come unto Christ, looks upon Him as in all things the Rock of his soul. Has he confidence toward God? His language is—"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ." His language is—"We are the circumcision, who put no confidence in the flesh, but glory in Christ Jesus." Looks he for happiness? He can say—"Whom have

I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison with Thee." "Whom, having not seen, I love; in whom, though now I see Him not, yet believing, I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." He is the Rock of His people in the hour of their adversity. Whither do they fly for refuge, and to whom do they look for security, but to Him who is set forth in Scripture as their strong-hold, whereunto they may alway resort—their "very present help in time of trouble?" And to whom do they turn their eager eye, when heart and flesh fail them, and death's dark shadows thicken around them? "My flesh and my heart faileth," is their language, "but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

Thus, then, brethren you see standing side by side, the one "rock" of the Christian's hope, and confidence, and happiness, and the manifold rocks that the men of this world set up for themselves. "The rock of our salvation" is God in Christ; a reconciled Father, filling us with all the fulness of His own Divine essence; dwelling in us, and we in Him; giving us such strength and security, that we may meekly, but fearlessly say—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "We are persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

II. Having thus the Rock of the believer, and the rocks of the unbeliever, side by side, suffer us to challenge the whole world to the controversy; and upon their own showing we will prove the transcendancy of our rock, as compared with theirs.

Were we indeed to take the testimony of those who have tried and proved the Rock of salvation—and those who have tried and proved it can surely best estimate its worth; were we to take the testimony of the ransomed spirits of the just, that now surround the Rock of their salvation in heaven, they would with one voice and with one spirit declare, "There is none in heaven in comparison with Him; none is worthy of a thought, or a hope, or an affection, in comparison with Him

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive honour and glory and might and dominion and power." Were we to come down to the Church militant on earth, and to ask those who have in truth and sincerity rested their hope on Him, found their happiness in His favour, they would bear testimony—"His favour is life, and His loving-kindness is better than life:" "we count all things but dung, that we may win Christ, and be found in Him." But the world might hold, that these were partial witnesses; they might demur to their testimony, and say, it was an interested testimony. We will bring forward, then, the world itself, and it shall give its evidence; and in that evidence we will convince the world of the hollowness of their hope, and of the dark mistake of their religion.

We bring forward, then, the indirect and undesigned testimony of the world in favour of the Rock of our salvation, in the first instance, in that the world gives to that Rock a measure of respect and reverence wholly inconsistent with the manner in which, in their heart and life, they treat that Rock. Why is it, that you find, that for the most part the men who never give their hearts to Christ, nor their lives to His service, yet render to Him an indirect and reluctant homage? They pay certain reverence to His day, certain regard to His sanctuary, certain homage to His ordinances and His laws. They will make sacrifices of property, and sacrifices of time, for the indirect promotion of His kingdom. They will "do many things" on behalf of the religion of Christ Jesus; and yet, in the face of all these concessions, they withhold from Him their heart, and they "will not have Him to reign over them." If indeed the religion of Christ be altogether without foundation and without reality, why do they not discard it entirely? If they give it a certain measure of regard and respect, does it not argue, that they have a lurking misgiving that after all it is the truth, and it is that which alone demands the homage of their hearts. They themselves, then, "being the judges," they admit and concede to the religion of Christ, that there is in it a power, and a truth, and a majesty, that they cannot wholly overcome or repudiate.

This, too, is the more strikingly shown, when we further bring forward that respect and homage, which they often pay to the worth and to the excellency of the

true servants of Christ. What is more common, than to find bad men overwhelmed with a degree of awe and of respect, (which they themselves dislike, and resist inwardly,) when they are brought into contact, and into the companionship of the true, simple, unsophisticated, undissembled servants of Christ? What is more common, than for them to feel what our great poet has so strikingly and beautifully imaged, when Ithuriel wakes up Satan from his dark disguise:

"He stood abash'd,
And felt how awful goodness is!"

Where is the man, even the scorner or the infidel, that when he is brought into the presence of a meek, lowly servant of Christ, who not in name, but in truth, is loyal to his Lord, and discovers "the beauty of holiness" beaming in his countenance, and surrounding his life and conversation—where is the man that has not sometimes been arrested and overawed by that dim reflection of the image of Christ, thus seen upon the countenance and the character of His servant? Where, too, is the bold, daring scoffer, that has not oftentimes felt an inward conviction of the worth and excellency of the servants of Christ, even though he has been able to stifle the expression of his inward feeling? We have seen it, that in the scene of riot and of revelry, when a meek messenger of God hath entered, and his lips have been silent, and he hath simply looked the sad feeling of his heart, one by one that company of revellers have arisen and gone forth, as they in the temple did, in the presence of the Redeemer, and have left the man of God, silent and alone. Why? There was a secret consciousness within the men, that compelled them, in spite of themselves, to render this tribute to true godliness. "Themselves being judges," the man of God had an elevation, a purity, a dignity, that they knew not, and yet the worth and the power of which they could not but feel.

And much more is this indirect tribute of the enemies of "our Rock" to the Rock of our salvation, often rendered, when the servants of God have passed to their rest, and their obnoxious proximity and their rebuking example no more disturb the false peace of the men of this world. Over the grave of the true and undissembled servant of God, how seldom, even from the lips of the bad, you hear anything but respect and love! "The memory of the just is blessed,"

while "the name of the wicked rots;" and the bad "themselves being judges," they would wish their souls in the soul's place of him, on whose grave you may write without doubt—"He sleepeth in Jesus." When the tongue of envy is silent, and when the bitter feeling of rivalry and of dislike which superior virtue will always excite, have passed away, because the man is gone from this vain scene; then how will the very enemies of the good man "be at peace with him," and how will they exchange the language of reviling and reproach for the language of eulogy and admiration! What means this tribute to the men, whose principles they profess to despise, and upon whose Rock they pour contempt? What means it, but that in spite of themselves, they render homage to the reality of the religion of the Gospel; and "their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being the judges?"

But we have another testimony rendered by the worldly and the wicked to the Rock of the Christian, that is still more striking; and that is, the high standard that they set up for the righteous to observe. A standard, how much more elevated than their own! Nothing is more common, than to find the most worldly men expecting from Christians a purity of morals, a serenity of spirit, an elevation above the things—the distracting things of the world, a calmness in sorrow, a weanedness from earthly pleasure, a superiority to the strifes and rivalries of a passing and perishing world, a niceness of integrity, an exactitude of conscientiousness, that they never expect or look for from their own! What is more common, than to find men of the world seeing with an eagle eye any little defection or deviation from high principle in the soldier of the cross?—saying—'It would not have mattered, if he had not professed to be religious; but for one who calls himself a Christian thus to behave, it is intolerable.' If the same deviation, or a far greater, from the line of high honour or of common honesty, had taken place in one of themselves, they would have passed it by with a smile, or treated it but as a venial and light offence; but in a Christian they brand it with the darkest brand. We do not complain of it; it is right and meet, that they who profess more than others, should do more than others, and they whose Rock is the Rock of heaven should walk with a

heavenly conversation; but yet the world, by all these concessions, admit that the Christian's standard is an unspeakably more glorious and perfect standard, than their own. Do they not admit, that "their rock is not as our Rock," and that the godliness that is in Christ Jesus produces, and ought to produce, a purity of motive, an elevation of spirit, a perfection of character, which worldly principles and worldly religion can never pretend to produce?

But further than this: you find the world again and again bringing forward against Christians, charges, that if they had been incurred by any of their own company, they would never have thought of doing so much as adduce. What they would regard in the world as almost evidence of spirit and of high-mindedness, they cannot tolerate in the Christian; showing that in spiritual things as well as in temporal things, they have set up a standard for the Christian, which, however it may fall below the true standard, yet "themselves being judges" is immeasurably more elevated than their own. And when a Christian man comes back to themselves, and leaves the high path which he professed to be pursuing, it is not uncommon for the world to speak of him as a fallen man—"He has fallen." What, then! when he comes down from the Rock of Salvation to their rock, he has fallen, the world "themselves being judges! It is marvellous how the most careless and thoughtless will thus indirectly give testimony to the excellency of the Rock of our hope; how the world itself admits, even whilst it hates, the excellency of the Rock of our Salvation.

But there is a further testimony, that the world cannot withhold in spite of itself—which it is, thank God, daily giving; and that is, the multitudes who are brought out of the world, and brought to the Rock of our hope. Can the world boast of its conversions from Christianity to infidelity, to vice, and to folly? A few base apostates it may show—men who, itself testifies, have fallen; men who have not made any sacrifices in order to become worldly, but have been bribed, and seduced, and warped from their allegiance, and led to barter their conscience for their gain, or their salvation for their sensual enjoyment; and has the world anything to boast of, in such achievements and trophies? She makes them often "tenfold more the children of hell

than they were before ;" and she usually despises them for their hypocrisy, and condemns them for their want of principle and decision. But, thank God, there has been going on since the day of Christ, and there is still going on, a continual conversion from the world to the Rock of our salvation. The Redeemer draws one and another to Himself; and that, not by holding out to them earthly bribes and temporal inducements, but in the face of the world's scoff and frown, and often of the loss of reputation and of every earthly advantage. Spite of all these things, how many are led to "count all things but dross, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus," their Redeemer; and every such trophy won from the world, and affixed to the Saviour, is a fresh evidence that "their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges"—a fresh evidence that the world cannot keep her own, cannot comfort her own, cannot satisfy her own, and that all whose eyes are opened to discover the "he that is in her right hand," are led to "flee for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel," and abandoning all their companionships, and all their long-cherished habits, to cling to "the Rock of ages," as "all their salvation and all their desire."

But the world gives a further testimony to the transcendancy of our Rock; and that in an hour, when if ever, truth will come out from a man's inmost heart, and spite of himself find utterance from his lips. In the time of tribulation, and in the hour of death, how often do the worldly and the wicked bear testimony, that "their rock is not as our Rock!" If men's rock will stand when "heart and flesh fail them," and will not shake when all things earthly are giving way; if then they can calmly repose and anticipate judgment and eternity without apprehension, happy are they. But how often does it happen, that when the men of this world are stripped of their earthly good, and bereft of their cherished objects of affection; when their delights are laid prostrate, then they begin in the sadness and solitude of affliction to ask after the neglected Bible, and to inquire—Is there no comforter that can bind up a broken heart, and infuse balm into a wounded spirit? They begin to ask then for the comforters and counsellors whom they were wont to set

at nought; and the minister of God is often invited to the chamber of death and the house of mourning, who was scouted and scorned in the house of feasting and prosperity. How often do you find, that when the earthly good fails, with which the heart (as it thought) has been filled, then crushed and overwhelmed, it begins to yearn for some higher and more abiding good, which the world cannot give, and the world cannot take away! Much more, on the bed of sickness, and in the approach of death, what is more common than for the most giddy and heedless and earthly minded to begin to feel that the rock they trusted in, though it might do for time, will not stand for eternity; though it might bear them up amidst the sunshine, will not avail them in the dark, thickening shadows of an approaching and eternal night. How many a time has the messenger of Christ been summoned to the bed of sickness! how many a time has the trembling and dying man then begun to cry—"Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I!" Happy for him, if he hath not begun too late, and if the house of his confidence is not falling in ruins around him, when it is too late to "fly for refuge to the hope set before him."

Christian brethren, if, then, the men of this world pay respect and homage to the religion of Christ, even when they will not submit to its claims; if they pay respect to the righteous and good, even while they dislike their principles and disrelish their character; if they set up a standard for the Christian, which they admit to be immeasurably higher than they set up for themselves; if they are continually yielding up of their numbers to Christ's faithful hosts, while they win none back but a few heartless, hypocritical revolvers; if they in the time of their tribulation, and the hour of their death, often look out for that Rock, that in the days of their strength and prosperity they despised; then "their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being the judges."

Men and brethren, are there not many in this holy assembly, neglecting the Saviour and His great salvation, that have had in their own minds and hearts such convictions and thoughts as we have endeavoured feebly to delineate? Are there indeed any, who do not in their own secret soul admit the justice of this line of argument, and, "themselves being

the judges," confess that there is something more true and more abiding and more satisfactory in the service of Christ Jesus, than in all the things for which they are bartering their souls and their Saviour? I would conjure them, in the name of that Saviour who will shortly judge us, do not put away from you the inference that must be drawn from such convictions, but earnestly pray and study that your inclinations may be brought into harmony with your conviction, and that you may be brought to renounce all other confidences, and break loose from all hindrances, and "fly for refuge to the hope set before you," wherein you may shelter yourselves from the storm of Divine wrath; wherein you may find a blessed resting place amid life's tumults, disappointments and changes; and wherein you may repose, unshaken and undisturbed, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. Would to God, that the men of this world would but follow out those natural convictions of conscience, those indications even of fallen reason, which God graciously vouchsafes to them; and that they were led by these to seek for that clearer and fuller light, which the Spirit of God and the Gospel of Christ would impart to them; that so they might be brought out of self to the Saviour, and from a dying world to Him that is "the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Christian brethren, is the rock of our hope so infinitely transcendent to all beside, even those who slight it "being judges?" Then cleave to it with more tenacity; rest upon it with more simplicity; delight in it with more entireness of heart and affection. Surely in these days, when you find men so unstable, and earthly things and outward things so shaken, and dark forebodings and fore-shadowings of trial, already seem in our horizon, you are more than ever called upon to see to it, that you be found hidden in the clefts of the rock that cannot be moved; that so, come what may, you may be serene; happen what will, you may be at peace; that so, you may rejoice to know—"The Lord is my strength and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies, came upon me, to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host rise up against us, we will not fear," if "the

Lord of hosts is with us, and the God of Jacob is our refuge." "Come, My people," (shall we not hear the voice of our Deliverer say?) "enter into your chamber, and hide yourselves for a little time, until this calamity be overpast." Happy the man, who is in the Rock of ages! He is to be earnest, but he is not to be anxious; he is to be diligent, but not disturbed; to do his duty, and fear no result. If God be his rock, the whole universe cannot harm him; nay, not a hair of his head—for "the hairs of his head are all numbered."

Beloved brethren, when does the mariner feel the rock most strong and most precious? When, shipwrecked, he has reached its summit, and reposes upon its immutability, and the storm is howling around, and the billows are dashing at its base, but cannot reach him upon its calm summit, and cannot shake it; then is his rock most precious. So should it be with the children of God. In the storm, and the tumult, and the fire, and the alarm, then should the rock in its immutable strength be felt most precious and most sure.

Beloved brethren, let me remind you, that the hour is coming, yea, is nigh at hand, when every one of us will have the house we are resting in, sifted and tried to the utmost; the hour of sickness, the day of judgment. Then indeed the man that has built his house upon the sand, when the flood comes, and the rain descends, and the winds blow, and they beat upon his house, will find it fall, and great will be the fall of it. But the man who has digged deep, and built his house upon a rock; when the rains descend, and the winds blow, and the floods come, and beat upon his house, it shall not fall, because it is founded upon a rock. God grant, that such may be the house of our hope—the house of our confidence and security. May we try to prove it now, that it may stand immutable then!

Beloved brethren, on behalf of the third service in this house of prayer—a service especially designed for the poor, and those for whom no accommodation is provided, I ask your generous aid. I ask it in your Master's name; in the name of that precious Gospel, that we believe is here proclaimed in its simplicity and truth; in the name of that blessed Rock, on which we trust all your hopes are hanging,—in whom your souls are finding rest. We will add no further plea.

Give; cheerfully give. £140 or £150 are needed for its annual support; and this is the first appeal made in its behalf. Shall it be made in vain?

God grant, beloved brethren, that in these days of change and uncertainty, when we are led to "cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for where-

is he to be accounted of?"—we may be more led to realize the precious promise, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee:" "trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

THE BELIEVER GOD'S TEMPLE.

EVERY true believer is a temple of God. "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?"—(1 Cor. xvi. 19)? This becomes the case on his believing in Christ with the heart. Thus the apostle prays for his Ephesians, "that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith." Faith is the grand medium of salvation. Instrumentally, it both justifies and sanctifies. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," says St. Paul. "God purified their hearts by faith," says St. Peter. Well is it styled "precious faith." By faith, then a person becomes a living temple of the Lord. He dwells in Christ, and Christ in him. Man was God's temple originally. Every chamber in his capacious soul was exquisitely finished and furnished by the hand of the great Builder, who built all things. It was adorned with the beauties of holiness, and brightly reflected the Divine image. Adam's heart was an altar of incense, sending up the continual tributes of praise and thanksgiving and ardent affections to his Maker. But, alas! man, being in honour, abode not. The spoiler quickly came, and desecrated that lovely shrine. Sin entering, the Spirit of holiness forsook His profaned sanctuary. God and His favourite were friends no longer. A breach ensued, a great gulph—blessed be God, not a fixed gulph—separated them. A distance vast as between heaven and earth—I had almost said, between heaven and hell—intervened between them. Yes, all the distance that exists between holiness and sin; and that is no less than infinite. And this had continued for ever, so far as depended on us; for Adam now became spiritually dead, verifying literally, the Divine premonition—(Gen. ii. 17). He became an idol temple. Human nature, until renewed by Divine grace, is now universally depraved. Here is the wondrous problem solved, how creatures, proceeding from an infinitely holy and good Creator, came to be what we find them to be. "God made man upright; but he has sought out many inventions"—or "corruptions"—(Eccl. vii. 29). He has destroyed himself. In Adam all died; because in him all sinned: the tree was in the acorn. Thus, the primeval temple was dismantled, the silver became dross, the most fine gold was changed, the lamp of God was extinguished, the glory departed, the candlestick was removed; all that remained was but a melancholy mass of ruins, unassorted fragments of the original structure; exhibiting at once our present desolation and former grandeur, monuments both of Jehovah's holiness and of man's ingratitude and folly. We may almost apply the words of the prophet, "Our holy and our beautiful house, where once we praised God, is brought even to the ground; and all our pleasant things are laid waste." "But, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." God, in infinite mercy, determined to restore what had thus been destroyed. But, before this could be effected, two things were absolutely requisite: first, satisfaction must be made to God's offended majesty for our guilt; and secondly, the Holy Spirit must descend and reconstruct the temple. Some things seem necessary for God, and some not. Some He may do, others He must do (we speak with reverence). It was not necessary for Him to pardon us; but it does seem absolutely necessary that, in pardoning, He should maintain the interests of holiness by condemning sin. He could not extend mercy to man at the expense of justice to Himself, and indeed, to His moral creatures generally. He could not, so far as appears from His Word, consistently with His Divine perfections—consistently therefore, with what He owes Himself—again condescend to intimate contact with men, until sin, the cause of separation, were previously fully atoned. God is a just God while a Saviour. There is no reconciliation without a satisfaction, no sanctification without justification.—*Rev. J. D. Hull.*

GOD'S JUDGMENTS UPON A GUILTY LAND.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH, GRANVILLE SQUARE, PENTONVILLE,
ON SUNDAY EVENING, MAY 4, 1845.

"And He called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others He said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary."—Ezekiel ix. 3—6.

THESE words stand connected with a most awful and impressive vision, vouchsafed to the prophet; intended to represent to him, in the first place, the abominations which were perpetrated by the house of Israel; in the next place, the judgments and desolations that were overhanging them; and, in the third place, the separation that God would make between the faithful and the faithless, those that feared Him and those that feared Him not. The prophet was seated in his house, with certain of the elders of Judah sitting before him, when a mysterious appearance represented to him the presence of the Spirit of God, and he was taken by a lock of his head, and carried to the temple in Jerusalem; and there he was caused to inspect the various dark mysteries of iniquity, that defiled the very courts of the house of the Lord. He had his attention directed to the image of jealousy, that was placed at the northern door; he was then taken into the court, and a hole in the wall was pointed out to him, and he was commanded to dig through the wall; and having done so, he was ushered into an apartment, where there were graven upon the walls the various hideous idols and accursed things, which Israel worshipped instead of the living God, and before them there stood men with censers, from which a cloud of smoke and perfume ascended to these idols. Afterwards he was taken to hear the lamentations of those that worshipped the heathen god Tammuz, defiling the Lord's holy place;

and subsequently he was brought to the western gate, and there he saw five-and-twenty men, with their backs towards the temple of the Lord and their faces towards the sun, "worshipping the creature instead of the Creator," and turning their backs upon the God who bade that sun to shine. The Lord then demands, in righteous wrath—"Hast thou seen this, O son of man! Is it a light thing to the house of Judah, that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke Me to anger; and lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury: Mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." Then it was, that the prophet heard a voice crying in his ears, and saying, "Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand." And behold, in his vision, "six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lay toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand;" and one man among them was diverse from the rest, for he was "clothed with linen," the garment of peace, and he had "a writer's ink-horn by his side," bespeaking him to be a scribe; "and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar." And then, in token that God was about to desert the temple built for Him among men, and to give it up to a pro-

found desolation, "the glory of the God of Israel went up from the cherub whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house," as in the act of departure. "And He called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of them that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." And to the others He said, "Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary."

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime" "were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come;" "that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." This memorable vision, though, in so far as it was fulfilled in Israel, it is history; yet, in so far as it foreshadowed the dealings of God with His nominal people in every age, it is prophetic. In so far as it is accomplished it stands forth a memorial to the righteous in every age; in so far as it is yet receiving fresh accomplishment, it is a blessed warning; and at the same time, a blessed encouragement to those that stand faithful amid the faithless, and amid abounding iniquity "keep their garments, that they walk not naked, and men behold their shame;" who mourn while others laugh, and humble themselves while others are puffed up, and are pleading before the Lord.

The application of the text, therefore, to the present time; its application to our own nominally Christian land; its application to those who are kept, through grace, "steadfast and immovable," in these times of perfidy and change, is too obvious to need illustration. We shall therefore, take the whole passage with application to ourselves; and we shall find that it is fraught with lessons—to the careless, of solemn admonition; to the believing, of holy hope and consolation. May the Spirit of God, the Convincer and the Comforter, be in the midst of us; that the careless may be awakened to call upon God, and the prayerful be led to watch more unto prayer, with all perseverance in supplication.

God has a people in the darkest and most desperate times. Such is the lesson, that inets us in the threshold of this description. The period when the prophet wrote, was, as the passage already brought forward, so clearly shows, a period of abominable idolatry, fearful superstition, gross sensuality and indulgence. It was a period when the flood-gates seemed to be thrown wide, and every barrier broken down; when evil stalked forth unblushingly, and the good and the virtuous had, as it were, to hide themselves in their chambers, and to mourn in secret. It was a period when iniquity especially abounded, where fidelity might most have been expected; in the very precincts and courts of God's house; the darkest transgressions were committed; and there, where "holiness to the Lord" should have been written upon all, profanation and hypocrisy and dissimulation most defiled. Such was the state of things when the prophet wrote; and brethren, such, to a fearful extent, is the state of things now. Among ourselves, how much of grovelling superstition, in the midst of boasted light and intellectual attainment and culture! Among ourselves, how much of bold profaneness and daring infidelity! Among ourselves, how much of pollution, through the very channels of the press! How much of growing and accumulating breach of the day of rest, and of every holy ordinance that God hath appointed, to keep the nation, as it were, in covenant with Himself! How fearfully have we, even within the precincts of the sanctuary, diverse strange and antiquated novelties rising up among us; and men solemnly pledged and sworn to maintain the pure, simple faith of the Reformation, symbolising with the very errors, rather than touch which, our martyred forefathers writhed upon the rack, pined in the dungeon, burned at the stake! "Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold." Evil and error show their heads with a bold and unblushing front; and men become familiarised with sentiments and with practices, that but a little time gone by, would have astounded them, and filled them with horror. Such is the tendency of vice to become familiar, and error to lose its repulsive aspect, when we have been used to contemplate it.

But, brethren, God had a people, even in Jerusalem, in those days of abounding abomination and iniquity; and He has

never left Himself without a faithful remnant in any period of His Church's history; though at one time His little flock was reduced to so small a number, that the ark on the bosom of the bounding deluge contained the whole, and the seven persons in that ark were His solitary Church below. And again, in the days of the prophet Elijah, who, in his desperation thought that he only was left, and they sought his life, to take it away; the Spirit of God assured him that there were yet "seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which had not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." And so it was, that in the cities of the plain, when God poured down the fiery flood, and swept them quick to hell, yet there was still a little band whom God led forth to a place of safety; and He could do nothing in taking vengeance, till the favoured and protected few were safe. And it is still a blessed truth, that in every nation, "naming the name of Christ," however the multitude may fall from the faith, and however the wavering and the unstable may abandon their principles, and may turn back, "like the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in her mire," God has still a little band, whom He counts and numbers as the shepherd his sheep; on whom His eye is ever fastened, and around whom His hands are ever outstretched, and "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." It is a blessed and a cheering thought to every servant of God whose hands are ready to hang down, and whose heart is waxing faint, to realise the blessed assurance, that however little he may be able to discern the true amid the false, and the sincere amid the hypocritical; however he may be sometimes tempted to say in his haste, with the psalmist, "all men are liars;" however he may be ready to ask, with the wise man, "A faithful man, who can find?"—it is a precious source of comfort to him, to realise the truth, that God's people are still kept in the faith, because Almighty grace keeps them; and though he may little know them, their Father in heaven, who seeth in secret, knoweth and numbereth them all, and he is not left alone; there are many that believe as he believes, hope as he hopes, mourn as he mourns, rejoice as he rejoices, are zealous with the same zeal,

because the same Spirit dwells in them all, the same holy fire burns on the altar of each of their hearts, and the same Divine Word of truth is their pole-star, their chart, and their guide.

Brethren, this is the first precious truth, that we find on the surface of this remarkable passage; that God in the darkest and most desperate times reserves a remnant unto Himself, that are found steadfast amid the wavering, and faithful amid the faithless. One remarkable distinctive character of that faithful remnant is likewise in these words touchingly portrayed. They "sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst of the land." Selfishness is the master principle of fallen man, whilst unrenewed. He cares but for his own paltry self; and his benevolence, and his philanthropy, and his patriotism, are little more than ramifications and expansions of selfishness—selfishness more refined, more disguised, more attenuated, but still mere selfishness. So it is therefore, that with the man of the world, care and concern about God's truth, and God's honour, and God's worship, and God's Word, is little more, indeed no more at best, than a mere pretext. And what may come upon others, what may befall the nation at large, or what may happen God's honour, he little reckons. Let him but have success and prosperity; let his merchandise thrive, and his wealth increase, and his family be secure, and his worldly schemes of aggrandisement be prospering, and he little heeds, and little fears sorrow or judgment or desolation coming upon others; he little regards how the Lord's name may be profaned, or His cause betrayed, or His truth trampled under foot. He looks no higher than earth and the things of earth; no wider than self, and the things of self. All centres and revolves upon that little pivot; and if self is but well, and it is well with all that concerns self he has little regard and little sympathy for what passes around him. But it is of the essence of the work of grace in the heart of a man, that it crucifies and denies self, and that it enshrines and it enthrones benevolence and sympathy; that it leads a man to live no more to himself, but to live first of all to his God, and then to his neighbour. It leads him to lose the absorbing interest in his own concerns which once possessed him, and to feel an absorbing interest in the

honour of his Redeemer, and the good of his fellows, and especially of his brethren in the faith—those that are of the household of faith. And such an one cannot, therefore, but feel a thrilling and a vivid interest, as in his land, as in his fellow-countrymen, so pre-eminently in the cause of his Redeemer and his Father. This will be nearer and dearer to him than even of fortune, and fame, and family and life; because “hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,” these are the crowning supplications his Lord hath taught him to offer, and therefore they express the highest emotion of his heart. Then may come self-salvation—salvation for himself—“Forgive us our trespasses;” then self-sustenance—“Give us our daily bread;” then self-protection—“Deliver us from evil;” but God’s honour and God’s kingdom—this must be supreme, and will be, in the heart where His Spirit reigns; and consequently what concerns the truth of God and His honour, will be more intensely interesting to the renewed mind, than what concerns his prosperity, or the prosperity of his family, or his friends, or his country. If God be glorified, he can rejoice, though himself be abased; though sorrow and shame were his lot, if it will redound more to the glory of his Father, he will say with the great apostle—“Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” And consequently, if you trace the history of the righteous, as recorded in the Book of God, you will find them specially distinguished for this, that they were very jealous for the name of the Lord God of hosts. They were keenly sensitive of any insult or injury put upon the name of their Father in heaven. They were more stung with what cast reflection on God, than with what cast reflection on themselves; and they were more intensely grieved and distressed when God was provoked, than when they themselves suffered the acutest anguish. So it was with the prophet Jeremiah when he exclaimed—“Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” So it was with the beloved psalmist when he said—“Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law.” And so it was with the

prophet Daniel, when he humbled himself before God in secret with fastings, and with weeping, and with prayers, and confessed his own sins, and the sins of the fathers, and the sins of his people Israel. And so it was with these faithful amid the faithless. They “sighed and cried” in secret, because of “all the abominations that were done” in the land.

And it is in the present day, as it was in days gone by. Those that are true to God, and faithful to their principles, cannot turn an insensible heart towards whatever is fitted to entrench upon the truth, or to compromise the honour, or to tarnish the glory of the Lord and His Gospel among us. They must and will feel as if the apple of the eye were touched, when the honour of their Lord and Master is invaded; and if they cannot withstand and resist such invasion, at least they will “sigh and cry,” and humble themselves in secret. For this, after all, is the most gracious and godly sighing. It is not merely intensity of zeal; it is not merely public endeavour; it is not merely complaining and finding fault with others; but it is rather a spirit of penitence and humiliation—contrition for his own sins, and the sins of his friends and relatives, the sins of his acquaintance and kinsfolk; the sins of his land, as well as the sins of the rulers of his land. It is this spirit of gracious and humble sorrow, that especially distinguishes the true zeal of the servant of God from the false fire that is kindled from earth, and with earth will expire. It is only the true, zealous servant of God, that mingles tears with his righteous indignation, like his blessed Lord in the temple, who “looked round about on them, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.” There was righteous anger, but it was softened and tempered by a deep grief of spirit. It was the anger of sorrow, and not the anger of nature. Beloved brethren, this of all marks, perhaps, is the surest, of one that is a true Christian patriot—a true and faithful soldier of the cross; that his sorrow in secret is mingled with his zeal in public; and that, after he has done all that lies in him, to withstand the inbreak of iniquity, and to “lift up a standard against the enemy, when he comes in like a flood,” he retires into his closet, where God only is witness, and there he pours out the tide of his sorrow at that

mercy-seat where it will not be disregarded.

Brethren, are there such among ourselves? If there be a blessed band, which assuredly there is, in the midst of this guilty nation; if, in spite of abounding error and overflowing ungodliness, there still be a goodly band, prepared to sacrifice and stake everything for the truth's sake; then assuredly these men, could you track them where they would have no one to trace them save Him who seeth all things, would be found in seasons like the present, oftentimes communing in their chambers with their God; and He who "puts their tears into His bottle," in witness of their separation from a gain-saying, selfish and scoffing world around them; their sorrow is remembered in His presence, and their sighs are registered in "the book of His remembrance."

Then, brethren, there follows another and a blessed lesson from this memorable passage; that those who thus "sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in" the land, shall be noted and marked by God, and stand forth a shielded and protected people, in the midst of the desolations that are coming upon the ungodly. Or ever the men with their slaughter weapons could strike one transgressor, the messenger of peace with the ink horn at his side, and clothed with his linen raiment, went before, and up and down through the city, and the streets thereof, and he marked every man that was found thus mourning for the abominations that were done; so that, or ever the slaughter commenced, the men who were not to be harmed or touched of the destroying angel stood distinct; and there was not one confounded with those that were to perish. Even as it was in the night of Egypt's desolation: or ever the destroying angel winged his flight to and fro through the fated land, there was the mark of the blood upon the door post and the lintel; and when the destroying angel saw the blood, he passed it over, and death did not enter one dwelling thus marked out—the spared and the shielded of heaven. So it was in those desolations that were overhanging Israel. The people of God were set apart by themselves, and noted, so that they could be "known and read of all men."

And, brethren, it has often been thus in the judgments of God upon professing nations, who have, in their ungodliness

and abominations, betrayed His truth, and provoked Him to vengeance. We may observe, in the judgments of God, a line of wide distinction. There are judgments upon the faithful, or rather, corrections for the faithful; and there are judgments upon the unfaithful, as distinguished from the faithful. When the judgments are upon the faithful, for their correction, and for the manifestation of God's grace in them, then those judgments pass over the unfaithful, and the worldly, and light upon the saints alone; the world and the false professor being the very instruments of God's just chastisement. So was it in the history of the noble army of martyrs. Not the faithless, but the faithful, endured unto death; and God's people were led as sheep to the slaughter, and the hypocritical, erroneous professors of a false faith, were oftentimes the rod the Father used, to correct and chasten His children.

But we may observe another class of judgments, which is upon the hypocrite and dissembler and false professor and the ungodly world, within the pale of the visible Church. And then there is a broad distinction. God makes it manifest who are His and who are not. He, as it were, as Satan said of Job, places a hedge around His people, so that no harm can come nigh them. Mark it thus in the desolation of the ancient world. The little faithful Church, as we have reminded you, was carried in safety on the surface of the overwhelming billows in the ark, that was piloted by the Almighty himself, whilst the whole world of the wicked were swept with the besom of destruction; the righteous saved, the ark preserved, the transgressors utterly consumed. And so again, if you come to the cities of the plain, where, as we have reminded you, there was but one holy family, whose souls were "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked;" there was sorrow, and grief, and sighing, and mourning for the abominations amid which they dwelt; they were led out by angel guides, and sped on their way, for God could do nothing until they were secure; and when they were in the place of refuge, then came down the fiery deluge, that took those cities of the plain at once into the pit. And so it was in the destruction of Jerusalem under the Gospel dispensation. When the armies came to encompass it about, and the abomination of desolation,

spoken of by the prophet Daniel, was seen standing in the holy place, then the people of God remembered their Master's warning word, that they should flee; and they fled, and they found refuge in the little city of Pella, as Lot and his family had done in Zoar, and not a hair of their heads fell to the ground. The wicked, and the blaspheming, and the wavering, and the fearful fell in that tremendous carnage; but the Christian band of Christ's true disciples all rejoiced in safety and in peace. And so, brethren, it has been in later times. There have been seasons since, in the history of the Church, in which God's people have been marvelously preserved; the wicked and the dissembling have fallen around them, and in the language of the psalmist, "a thousand have fallen at their side, and ten thousand at their right hand, but it has not come nigh them; they have dwelt in the secret place of the Most High, and abode under the shadow of the Almighty," and they have "not been afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day." And it was such a class and character of judgments that was coming on Jerusalem. It was not upon the faithful, but upon the infidel, the abominable and the idolatrous. It was upon those who called themselves Jews, and yet were the children of Satan; that bore the mark of circumcision, and yet had received the mark of the dragon. It was upon these, the judgments were coming; and therefore God, before those judgments descended, marked off His people, and they were a distinct people—safe amid the universal peril, and unscathed amid the universal ruin. What a beautiful and blessed sight is this!

And so, brethren, we have reason to believe it will be in latter day visitations and judgments. God, in later days, is represented again in the Book of Revelation, sending forth to seal the thousands that are found, that have not the mark of the beast upon their brow. God marks them with His own heavenly stamp, and they, too, are again declared to be spared, even as those in the days of the prophet Ezekiel were protected.

And does not God mark and seal His people still? "The foundation of the Lord standeth sure," as we have said, having this secret "seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." But it has this open seal—"Let every one that nameth

the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Is not every soul that is separated from sin, and from the world, set apart for God? Is not every soul that is washed in the blood of the Lamb, and sprinkled with that precious atonement, marked as belonging to the Lamb? Is not every one that believeth in Christ, and is sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of the purchased possession—is it not marked? Does he not carry "Holiness to the Lord" on his spirit—on his life? May he not be regarded as the "epistle of Christ, known and read of all men?" Will he not seek to keep his garments clean, and seek to walk unspotted from the world? Will he not stand forth a mark for the derision and scorn of the wicked, the worldly, the unbelieving, and the hypocrite? But does he not stand forth with the image of Christ upon his brow? and will not Christ honour and support His own faithful people, who bear His own stamp, the image and superscription of their King? He has thus marked them; and they shall be known by His avenging angels, when they come forth to visit a hypocritical Church, and an ungodly world.

Brethren, and this solemn vision further sets before us the unsparing desolation that comes upon a professing nation, when God takes vengeance, and none but His few faithful are spared. God said of Jerusalem, in the prospect of His coming judgments—"Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were there, they should save neither sons nor daughters; they should but save their own souls alive." And when a nation has filled up the measure of its iniquity; when it has broken the covenant and abandoned the privileges that God gave it, it is no sign that God will not visit that nation, that there may be a multitude of faithful people in the midst of it. It may be, that they shall save but their own souls. There was more of vital godliness in Jerusalem when its utter desolation came upon it, than there had been for a long time before, probably from the very days of the prophets themselves, for there was all the righteous flock of Christ in the midst of Jerusalem. But did they save the city? No; it knew not the day of its visitation, and the things that belonged to its peace were hid from its eyes, and the righteous did "but save their own souls alive," and the city and the land of Jerusalem

were left to unmitigated and unmeasured judgment.

Brethren, this is an important point. There are men that presume upon the security and the prosperity of our land, because of the many righteous that are found among it. Thank God that there are such, and no doubt they will be marked and preserved in the hour of visitation; but it does not at all argue that our highly favoured, but most, ungrateful and unfaithful land may not be verging fast on those desolations, that have, sooner or later, come upon other nations in every period of the world. There never was a nation yet, that had the truth of God committed to it, that has not, sooner or later, been judged and punished for its unfaithfulness to its high charge; and what is there in our own country, that should save her from that charge? Has she been less guilty? Weigh her conduct against her privileges, and say, is she not guilty above all others? because, in proportion to her light is her condemnation, if she have "loved darkness rather than light;" and if, like Capernaum, she has been exalted to heaven in her blessings, shall she not, like Capernaum, be thrust down to hell in her judgments, if she know not the day of her visitation? Brethren, it is a point of deep, and solemn, and personal interest to us all, how far is not our land verging fast on that state of anarchy, and misrule, and disquietude, and desolation, which shall prove the barbingers of the most fearful and frightful of all judgments—judgments from within; judgments from ourselves; judgments occasioned by the unfaithfulness of the Church, allowed by God to come upon us; self-created, and therefore the more bitter and the more tremendous? At all events, it becomes every man to view with sober and with solemn eye, the present aspect and appearance of things, taken in connexion with the indications of prophecy, that "more sure word, to which we do well to take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place." When we take the aspect of things, in connexion with that sure light, there is much—very much—to make the man of God tremble, but not despair; sad, but not hopeless; to make him "sigh and cry for all the abominations" that are accumulating in the land: the infidel tone of sentiment; the bold and blasphemous profaneness; the tri-

fling and tampering with idolatry; the making light of superstition; the asking, What is truth? and, who is to decide what is true? as if the Bible were a fable, and God were a liar. Brethren, is there not, I say, much to make the servant of God in these days "sigh and cry," and abase himself for his own sins, and the sins of his land, and the sins of his Church, and the sins that are done in the sanctuary?

Mark, when these desolations come, (if they ever come,) how fearful will they be! Unparing. "Let not your eye spare." Who shall say what is the fearfulness of an angry and an avenging God? Our land has been, as it were, kept in the hollow of His hand. Desolations, that filled all Europe with intestine blood and devastation, came, as it were, to the verge of our shores; but they could not reach us or touch us. God sheltered this land. The rainbow of the covenant of our reformed faith surrounded our shores; and it was as if the avenging angel could not pass that hallowed boundary. And we are strangers to the horrible and fearful condition of a civilly agitated and convulsed land. God preserve us from ever personally and practically knowing such things! But if they come, what will be our condition, and what will be the fearful ruin that will follow! "Spare not." Oh! when the great God, who is "slow to anger," and to whom judgment is "a strange work," says, "Let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity," who shall not tremble and fear?

It shall be indiscriminate. The young man and the old, the woman and the child and the suckling—all shall be cut off, that are not found in Christ.

It shall be especially upon those that bear the name of Christ, and are not His. "Begin at My sanctuary." The unfaithful minister of Christ; the dissembling hypocrite, that dips his hand in the dish with his Saviour, and lifts up his heel against Him; the man, who under the cloak of high profession disguises dark and selfish deeds; the slave of sense, while he calls himself the disciple of a self-denying Saviour; the man who subordinates his principle to expediency, and his loyalty to God to worldly prosperity and gain; the man who counts "the truth as it is in Jesus" of far lighter esteem than the shining dress that he

gathers from the dust ;—that man will first feel the heavy blow of the slaughter weapon of the messenger of vengeance. "Begin at My sanctuary;" as His apostle afterwards said—"The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

But amidst the universal desolation, "come not near any man upon whom is the mark." There stand out amidst the prostrate ranks, here one and there another, unharmed and undismayed. The mark of the Lamb is upon their brows; the love of the Lamb is engrained in their hearts; the arms of God encompass them in safety; the messenger of evil hath no power to touch them. Blessed, blessed are they that shall be so found, when their Master cometh. "Behold," He saith, "I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

Men and brethren, let the solemn admonition, then, reach the man that presumes on present tranquillity, and blesses himself, though he neglects the shelter of his soul. My fellow sinner, if even thou slightest the warning of possible, and it may be probable, judgments upon our land and upon our Church; if thou even makest light of possible desolation in this present world; remember that there is but a step between thee and death; the breath in thy nostrils, between thee and everlasting destruction—the day when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and all things that are therein, shall be burned up. And "who may abide His appearing? and who may stand when He cometh?" If the mark of the Lamb is not found upon thy soul, where wilt thou flee for refuge then? Will the mountains fall upon thee, or the hills cover thee from the wrath of the Lamb?

Oh! let no man, therefore, whatever be his views of unaccomplished prophecy, whatever his views of the present prospects of the nation, let him not, as he values his own safety and the safety of his soul, give his eyes to slumber, or the temples of his head to take rest, till he has reason to trust that he has "fled for refuge" to hide himself in the clefts

of the Rock of ages, and that he is sealed and stamped in Christ with the Spirit of grace; and that, therefore, come what will, judgment or mercy, terror or triumph, life or death, he is secure, for he is in Christ. The ark encloses him; the deluge cannot harm him.

Brethren, are you trusting that the mark of the Lamb is upon your lives and upon your souls? Then where is your jealousy for the honour of God? Where is your grief for the shame and reproach brought upon His holy name? Where is your indignation against the betrayal of His truth? Where is your closet and unseen sorrow and grief for "the abominations that are done" in the land? Can any man deny that there is a fearful spirit of infidelity, a fearful spirit of disloyalty to the simple truth, as delivered over to us by our martyred reformers, a fearful tendency to make light of all distinction between truth and error? Where is the man that can deny this? Where, then, is our grief for it? Where our deep distress of soul? Oh! brethren, it is a time for much prayer and supplication; a time for us to cease from man, "whose breath is in his nostrils," and to "trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength;" a time to let go our fond clinging to the arm of flesh, and to cling simply and singly to the everlasting arms that prop the universe, and are underneath the soul of every true believer.

Men and brethren, and is it not further a time when the people of God should encourage themselves in the Lord, and gird up the loins of their minds, and prepare for whatever may impend, that they be not found as others, out of their refuge, and afar from their Saviour's side, but following nigh unto Him, keeping close unto Him, walking in the assurance of His favour and love? They may await whatever God may be sending, or bringing upon the earth, sad and sorrowful, for so, they ought to be; their Saviour was, when He wept over Jerusalem and said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Sad and sorrowful therefore they must await them, but not despondently, "not as those that have no hope," but rejoicing to know, "the Lord sitteth above the water-floods, the Lord abideth King for ever;" and the whirlwind, and the

earthquake, and the fire, are but the harbingers of His gracious approach, and the "still small voice" shall be heard, that tells to His faithful, "It is I, be not afraid."

Yea, brethren, let us then, as it were, enter into our closet, and shut to our door, and hide ourselves a little time, until this tempest and tyranny be overpast, as the prophet so beautifully expresses it. Happy, happy they, that whatever be coming, are prepared for all. Let them realise the sentiment of a venerable, and holy, and consistent Christian in his dying hour, "There is no danger to the Christian." Oh! the sublime serenity and elevation of that man, who can sweetly, unpresumptuously say, 'There is no danger to me.'

Beloved brethren, in the service of the sanctuary, and support of the pure ministration of "the truth as it is in Jesus," we need not, and we will not, urge you cheerfully and freely to give. Thank God, we have the liberty of prophesying, as our martyred forefathers quaintly, but impressively styled it—we have the liberty of prophesying, none hindering us. We have our own scriptural and spiritual service in our own mother tongue; not the dark muttering of prayers in a language unknown, save to the priest. We have

still our simple, unadorned ceremonies and ordinances, most beautiful when most simple. Whether it shall be always so; whether the liberty of prophesying may not in just judgment for its abuse and neglect be crippled; whether the pure ordinances may not be superseded by a grovelling intermixture of a little Christianity with a vast deal of superstition and heathenism; whether we shall always worship God in our own tongue, wherein we were born, or hear only the unknown tongue, whilst others "peep and mutter"—God only knows. But whilst we have these blessings, let us not disesteem them. Let us not grudge whatsoever is meet and proper to maintain them, but thank God that we have such blessings still, use them with all diligence whilst they are vouchsafed, and sustain them with all generosity and largeness of heart, in token to our God that we value and we love them.

And finally, may God prepare us for whatever He has prepared for us; that whatever betides, we may be "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;" for the voice of the Captain of our salvation, to His soldiers and His servants, each one of them, is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

PREACHING, THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER.

In her daily ministrations, a Christian Church preaches plainly, without any figure or symbol or type, all that the tabernacle foreshadowed. The object of her ministry is not to sacrifice, but to preach. Their commission is that of ambassadors for Christ, and their instructions to preach the Gospel to every creature, and to beseech men to be reconciled to God. The administration of the sacraments is an important part of their duty, as public prayer and praise and thanksgiving are the indispensable elements in the constitution of public worship. But, inasmuch as sinners are justified by faith and faith only, and faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, and men cannot hear without a preacher, it inevitably follows that the preaching of Christ crucified is the great and characteristic duty of the Christian Church and her ministry. And therefore, St. Paul describing his office, says: "The ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God"—(Acts xx. 24). Yea, he does not scruple to say of his commission, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel;" in which declaration he does not mean to contravene the command of Christ to the apostles to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, nor to deny what he soon after asserts, that he was a steward of the mysteries of God; but to point out the great characteristic duty of the Christian minister, and to express the deep feeling which he entertained of the overwhelming importance of the preaching of the unsearchable riches of Christ, a feeling to which he gives vent frequently and in strong language, as in the second chapter of the first Corinthians, where he says, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."—*Dr. M'Caul.*

THE HARVEST ABUNDANT, BUT THE LABOURERS DEFICIENT.

A SERMON,
BY THE REV. F. CLOSE, A.M.

PREACHED AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH, SPITAL SQUARE, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
MAY 4, 1845.

On behalf of the Church of England Young Men's Society, for Aiding Missions at Home and Abroad.

"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."—Matthew ix. 36—38.

BEFORE I proceed to the elucidation of the words I have chosen for my text, it will be necessary for me this evening, beloved brethren, in few words to explain to you the nature of that humble, but promising institution, in whose cause I appear before you this night; otherwise you will not understand the mode of application which I shall endeavour to pursue in expounding the words before us. The institution, then, for which I plead to-night, is one little known at present, but which I conceive promises great things. It has been begun in the spirit of prayer and self-abasement, and, by God's blessing, will be greatly honoured in furthering His glorious cause. It is a company of young men, who, having the love of Christ in their hearts, and pity and compassion in their bosoms for their perishing fellow-creatures, have united together for the purpose of furthering, in every possible and legitimate mode, the cause of evangelising the world; and they undertake this, not simply in the way of collecting money, though that must of course be a prominent part of their duties, but their object is to interest other young men by the circulation of books, tracts and essays on philanthropic and religious subjects, and thus engage those of their own age and stamp in life, in those great objects which, alas! are still overlooked by heedless thousands. The money they collect in, according to one of their rules, divided equally between four societies which appear to be admirably well-chosen, though I shall reserve a few observations on that point to the close of my discourse; but these four societies embrace, you will see as soon as I name them, all the great objects which a Christian can have at heart in seeking the glory of God and the

good of his fellow-creatures. They divide the results of their efforts between the Church Missionary Society, the Society for propagating the Gospel among the Jews, the Church Pastoral-Aid Society, and the Colonial Church Society. You will perceive, as we pursue the subject before us, how these four institutions, kindred in spirit, one in doctrine, one in discipline, and having one great object in view, though they address themselves to different departments of human misery and ignorance, comprise, in fact, all classes—the heathen, the Jews, the desolate at home, and the miserable ignorance, the deplorable condition of our colonists abroad. In each of these aspects, you will perceive how beautifully the passage I have selected as the text is adapted to draw forth our spiritual sympathies towards those great objects, and how well I may ground upon it an appeal to the young men themselves, who are associated in this hallowed combination, and also an appeal to you generally to encourage them in this good and blessed work.

The blessed Saviour, at the time He uttered these words, appears to have been surrounded by eager crowds, who not only came to receive temporal relief for the disorders of their bodies, but who came hungering and thirsting after righteousness, to listen to the gracious words that flowed from His lips. And as He thus saw the multitudes pursuing Him to the wilderness and thronging Him on every side, He looked on them, He gazed on them, and the bowels of His compassion yearned over them—"He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

Let us listen to these words of our blessed Master in a spirit of prayer and teachableness; and may the Spirit of God make them profitable to our own souls as well as to the cause we have in hand.

Now I conceive we shall elucidate the passage before us more clearly, if we consider our blessed Saviour on this occasion in two points of view—first, as our example; and, secondly, as our teacher.

I. Let us look at Him, first, as our example. See how He looked on these multitudes, and the feeling of compassion with which He was moved towards them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. This is the first illustration He uses.

Now these were all Jews; they were all His own people, who in some sort were folded in one sheepfold, and had in some degree pastors and teachers; but all these were blind leaders of the blind, and He looked upon them as wandering wild, scattered up and down through the land, having none to guide them, none to show them the truth, and therefore objects of profound pity and commiseration. Now, beloved brethren, have we not a picture here generally indeed of the whole family of man? When God looks down on the children of men from the throne of His glory, He sees there vast multitudes as sheep wandering up and down amidst the dark mountains of sin, and corruption, and sorrow and death—He sees the millions of the human race as sheep having no shepherd. What an affecting description of the fallen family of man! and how exactly true is this picture with regard to the four divisions of the family of man, to which I have already pointed!

Take, for instance, the heathen world. Gaze, as you have often been invited to gaze, on this bleak world, upon the dark places of the earth, which are full of the habitations of cruelty. Think of the millions and thousands of millions of your fellow-creatures, who are without God and without Christ and without hope in the world; like ourselves sinners, but without a Saviour; like us mourning, but without a Comforter; like us sinking and sad and sorrowing, but knowing not of

the balm of Gilead and the Physician there; like us doomed to die—"dust thou art and to dust shall thou return"—but as they enter into the dark chambers of the grave, there is none to tell them whither they go, or what is to become of their immortal spirit. Oh! brethren, pity the poor heathen, the immense congregated multitudes living in wretchedness, in ignorance, in cruelty, in lust, in crime—whose gods are wicked, (and what must their worshippers be?)—whose religion is vice, and what must they be who follow and practise it?

Some persons, brethren, are wont to speak, as if we spent our strength for nought and in vain for the heathen abroad, while they tell us there are murderers and profligates in this highly favoured country; and so there are, but with this awful distinction, that these men sin against light, against knowledge, against moral influence, against the truth of God, whilst the poor heathen are taught to sin—vice and iniquity are their rule, pollution is their guide. Truly they are the children of the prince of darkness, the god of this world, who holds his fell dark dominion over those wretched and deluded sinners, who thus perish in ignorance and misery.

So might we say with regard to the very people on whom the Saviour then looked with pity and compassion. If in those days the true Messiah looked on the people of Israel, when they had their temple standing, their altars sending up incense before God, and the holy of holies where God dwelt—if at that time the Saviour looked on the Jews still in their own land, still in their own nation and country, possessing their civil and religious liberties to a great extent, as a multitude fainting, scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd, how would He look on them now, outcast from their God and their country—when they are indeed like solitary sheep wandering to and fro amidst the dark lands of the Gentiles, withered and blasted by the curse of the Almighty, and exposed to double wrath than the Gentiles themselves. Yes, brethren, let us in these days of false and cruel liberalism, boldly contend for the truth, and affirm, that the unbelieving Jew dwelling amongst Christians, daily resisting the light and truth, daily trampling on the Messiah, is in a state doubly pitiable to that of the Gentiles, and a double measure of wrath is in store for

such, unless he look on Him whom his fathers pierced, and mourn and repent and believe in Jesus. The Jew, then, in his present condition, is here affectinglly described.

Turn we for a moment to the third object of this institution, and tell me, if the picture the Saviour here draws is not true of ourselves. Might I not venture to assume, that within a mile of this place where we are assembled to-night, amidst the crowded streets and lanes of this manufacturing district, there are still, notwithstanding all that you and others have done to visit them in their darkness and iniquity, around your own doors a multitude, fainting, scattered, like wandering sheep, and refusing to be guided and tended by any shepherd? If it be not so, what mean those palaces of sin and shame that attract attention as we come to visit you on this sacred occasion? The marts of business are closed indeed, and God's Sabbath is honoured externally, but every twentieth door is open, its mouth yawning to receive the unwary traveller, and its gate going down unto hell! Oh! beloved brethren, I assure you, that in this highly favoured country, in our populous districts, and in many of our rural districts, the external appearance of which shall be picturesque and beautiful, with its village spire pointing to heaven, amidst the beauties of the landscape most pleasant to look upon, there is much darkness and deadness, and benighted heathenism to be found. In many of our rural, as well as in our manufacturing districts, the awful picture is unexaggerated; nay, comes not up to the truth. I know of one parish in the north, in which, when an active minister entered on his labours, out of 70,000 souls, it was calculated that at least 20,000 had never been baptised. Only think of 20,000 unbaptised heathens in one parish of our own highly favoured country, and then say if there be ought of exaggeration in the statement, that at our own doors there is still a scattered, fainting, dying, guilty, perishing multitude, not in the world of heathenism, but in our own highly favoured England.

But once more, let us turn our eyes abroad, and think of the lot of thousands of our countrymen, banished from their native land by hard necessity, by the difficulties of the times, by misfortune and calamity, seeking by the sweat of their brow, and in a distant and ungenial clime,

that subsistence which nature demands, for themselves and their children; and the worse part of their case is, that they are far from the ark of God, and the household of faith. How pitiable is their condition! They are indeed a fainting multitude. In some of the colonies of this highly favoured country, it has been discovered, that the settlers have almost lost the day of the week, and do not know when the Sabbath comes round, as in Newfoundland. In other places, settled seventy years ago, the foot of the messenger of peace has not been known to tread. I ask, then, if, among the colonial dependencies of this highly favoured land, there be not a scattered and fainting multitude, perishing for lack of knowledge? Oh! beloved brethren, the heart bleeds, and the eye should weep, when we hear such things, and know the depths of human necessity, the amount of human guilt, the ungodliness of man's heart, the pollution, the unbelief, the profligacy, the horrible drunkenness that disgraces most of our young colonies. I was awfully struck with this fact, brethren, not long since, in reading a colonial paper, and perceiving that all the advertisements for the sale of goods, held out the attraction of drink—there would be such and such a sale, at such and such a place, and that drink would be provided for those who attended it; in the hope that by the incipient intoxication, covetousness might profit. This is the state of many of our colonial dominions. Yes, we are grieved to say, that what was alleged against the Jew of old, is awfully true of nominal Christians of the present day among the heathen; far from the calm and benign influence of the Sabbath and the worship of God, and the holy sacrament—"the name of God is blasphemed among the heathen through you;" and as God said again, to the Jews, by Isaiah, they had exceeded the wickedness of the heathen, I might say of New South Wales for instance, that the vices of the Europeans have well nigh exterminated the aborigines.

Such, then, is the picture presented to you to-night; and is it not at least equal to that, which excited the Redeemer's pity?

But observe, again, our Lord uses another figure on this occasion, which marks not only the deplorable condition of the perishing multitude, but suggests a striking analogy in the circumstances and

efforts of our own times. He looked upon these multitudes, not only as sheep scattered without a shepherd, but He looked on them in another light—"the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." Now this suggests to our minds delightful thoughts, mingled with much that is calculated to humble us. He looked on these multitudes as a ripe field of corn ready to have the sickle put in, that it might bring forth a precious harvest of souls unto the heavenly garner. "The harvest indeed is plenteous!" Here are souls ready to be saved; here is a people, "hungering and thirsting after righteousness;" "the harvest, indeed is plenteous." The harvest is ready on the ground, but there are none to gather it in. Brethren, we have here, again, a most affecting and striking picture of at least three of the four departments of human sin and ignorance, of which we have spoken; and this it is, on which we should fix our attention.

With regard to the heathen, there is this characteristic to be added, that there are hundreds in all parts, and thousands of poor ignorant creatures, ready to be instructed, if you will send any one to instruct them. Here is the peculiarity of the case—there is a plenteous harvest bending down heavy with grain, and none to gather it in. Now, you yourselves have seen this "harvest" especially. I might say, within the walls of this comparatively small place of worship, you have seen many go forth, as I know, to my certain knowledge and high gratification, as missionaries, catechists, and teachers to the heathen. The cause has been advocated in this congregation for more than half a century; and many of you have largely contributed towards creating this appetite, this "hungering and thirsting," amongst the heathen, for the Word of life and salvation. Now, what is their condition, brethren? In the sight of God, what will be the enormity of our guilt, if we do not consider it? We have created an appetite we do not satisfy. We have brought sufficient light into the heathen world, to make them see their darkness; and shall we leave them there? We have awakened them to a sense of their degradation; and shall we leave them degraded? Here is the exact analogy of my text. Brethren, here is a "harvest" of souls, waiting to be gathered in; and yet the labourers are so few, that they cannot

gather it. Did you hear what happened a few years ago?—an affecting and awful fact, that 2,000 heathens, who had cast away their idols, went to the missionaries seeking instruction, but in consequence of the fewness of the missionaries, Christian teachers and catechists, these 2,000 souls went back again to heathenism, because there were none to instruct them? To my own mind, this is a most awful event—to have it recorded against us at the day of judgment, that our brother's blood will be required at our hands; that he stretched out his hand for pity and help, that he felt his degradation and misery, that he implored us to teach him, but that such was our coldness, our indifference, our covetousness, that we answered him, 'we have none to teach you!' "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few."

With regard to the Jewish people, the disproportion is probably not so great to the number of the people. It is probable, the number of missionaries to the Jews is more adequate, and equal to the sphere of their labour, because it is evidently more limited, than in the case of the immense millions of the heathen abroad. But I believe we might even find there, that more of the Jewish people are seeking instruction, and desiring to be taught, than we are able to instruct. And sure I am, when we come to the third department, to which I have alluded this evening, when we come to the condition of the perishing at home, then indeed we may say, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." What an awful, solemn, and yet encouraging fact is this, brethren! I believe it is uniformly true, that in every instance, without exception, where a zealous pastor, or zealous catechist has gone in and out among our manufacturing districts, even to the very darkest abodes of sin, vice, and iniquity, at the very outset, or at least very soon after, he is received with open arms; though unused to such influences, Christian affection melts the hearts of men, who have only known the selfishness of sin. I know some beautiful instances throughout the country—in Birmingham, Manchester and other places; in the worst and most degraded parts of these districts, a Church has been built, a Gospel minister fixed, a faithful man, ill-paid and overworked, going from house to

house; like those of old, and knowing nothing but Jesus Christ among them; his Church has been crowded, his schools filled, and the God of all grace rewards his labours in the melting hearts, the penitent spirits, of those who hear him; and soon, the dark, abandoned, ignorant, and profligate are changed, "clothed, and in their right minds, sitting at the feet of Jesus." Brethren, there is no difficulty in persuading the poor to listen to us; the difficulty is, to find some one to speak to them; that is the difficulty, at home or abroad. When presented to them in kindness and fidelity, they are always ready to hear the truth. And especially in the case of our poor colonists; the tales one hears and reads of those poor creatures are truly touching and affecting. I happen to know most of the state of the poor in the heart of our colony of Newfoundland, because I happen to have been instrumental, in a great measure, in sending out two of the schoolmasters to that distant colony—who have gone forth from our own Missionary Meeting; who were awakened at our Monthly Missionary Meetings to a love for souls, and who cheerfully exchanged the horrors of Newfoundland winters for the comforts of a National School at home. These devoted men have gone to that dismal land; and the sufferings they have to endure are great indeed. Yet the letters they write are most cheering. The poor people there, for the most part fishermen, having no money scarcely, and living entirely by barter, show a regard, an affection, a devotion to the missionaries of the Gospel beyond conception. When one visits them, they help him on his road; they give him their best, and are ready to give him all they have; they have in many instances built school rooms themselves, and sent the most pressing invitations to teachers to come among them, and instruct them. Brethren, even on the dark and barren shores of Newfoundland, "the harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few." That is the picture of things, over the whole earth. It is true, there may be here and there an unfruitful mission; but with respect to the great missions to the heathen and our colonies, we affirm, as before God and in this holy place, that their condition is, without exception, this—that your missionaries, your teachers, your catechists, your schoolmasters,

are sacrificed; their precious lives are sacrificed, they are almost murdered men, because we lay burdens on them they are unable to bear; and the weight of their ministerial duties, because they are so few in number, brings them not unfrequently to an untimely grave.

Now lastly, under this head, when the Saviour had thus looked on these multitudes, not only as scattered sheep and perishing sinners, but in a state of preparation and desire for God's truth, how did He act? Here is an example—"When He saw the multitude He was moved with compassion on them." Look unto Jesus, my brethren, in the days of His flesh, as your example. He was moved with compassion. His bowels of mercy yearned over these thirsty souls, who wanted the waters of life and had them not, who desired a teacher, but there was none to teach them, and He pitied them; He looked on them, and the tears of compassion rolled down His eyes as He gazed upon them. Now, Christian brethren, where is your pity? where is your compassion? Are you like-minded to Jesus? You cannot be followers of Jesus, unless you have imbibed the spirit of Jesus. May there not be some among us tonight, who have never shed a passing tear for the guilt and miseries of their fellow-creatures; who eat, and drink, and sleep, and buy and sell, and get gain, and marry and are given in marriage, and build and plant, but all for themselves? "All men seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's." Oh! how great is our condemnation, if that be so with us! Oh! how great our guilt! If you profess to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not pity His people; if the bowels of your compassion do not yearn over perishing sinners. I entreat you to think of these things; I entreat you, I warn you, in the name of the Lord, that "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." I have told you this night of the state of your fellow-creatures; if you "give sleep to your eyes, or slumber to your eyelids" until you have devoted something for their deliverance, you lie down to sleep under God's displeasure and not with His blessing and favour resting upon you. Do not say, "Am I my brother's keeper?"—you are; each man is responsible to God for his influence, his property, his talents, his time—they are all God's, and if we give Him all, we give Him but His own,

or what He has entrusted to us. But I will "hope better things of you, and things which accompany salvation, though I thus speak." I will hope, beloved brethren, that your hearts are not hardened to indifference, or callous to the cries and sufferings of your fellow-creatures. We often shudder when we see an aged emaciated being, standing at the door of one of the abodes of sin, and think of his temporal misery; but what is the state of his soul? If all the heathen at this moment in the manufacturing districts throughout this country were perishing of hunger, their condition would not be half so deplorable as they are now, for they are perishing for lack of food—of Him, whose name brings salvation.

II. But let us proceed, secondly, and more briefly, to consider our Lord and Master, not only as setting us an example of compassion, but in the character of a teacher. Having surveyed this perishing multitude, and looked on their condition, and especially on the inadequate provision made for their souls, He now addresses a command—He speaks to His disciples. What is to be done? What can be done? supposing every heart in this house of God is now for a moment touched with pity and compassion for this perishing multitude—the question returns, what shall we do? What shall we give? Perhaps we think, we shall go out to preach or teach—what does the Saviour say? He uses one short and most pithy expression—He says, "Pray ye therefore."

See then, the very first duty Christ inculcates upon us in this hopeless case—for speaking after the manner of men, it is hopeless—"Pray ye!" Behold, brethren, the first duty, and first privilege of the Christian; it is prayer. Thus it was when Moses and Aaron, from time to time were overwhelmed at the terrors of their situation, with the difficulties around them, and the inflamed multitudes that came about them; you always find they "fell on their faces before the Lord, and cried unto the Lord;" and here, brethren, is our refuge still. When you think of the perishing thousands, the guilty and miserable, the dark and benighted, oh! pray; give yourself to prayer! Enter into your chamber, and keep there; let your eye run down in tears because of the abominations, because of the pollution, because of the iniquity and ungodliness, the darkness and superstition,

that prevail on the earth, and because of the lukewarmness of so many. "Pray." Here is the thing that all can do; here is no distinction between the rich and poor, between pastors and people; all, all alike may pray; and the prayers of all, yea, the prayer of the little child, and the prayer of him of hoary hairs, and the prayer of the great, and the prayer of the beggar on the dunghill, are equally acceptable to Him, who bids us all take refuge in prayer.

Brothren, that work which is not begun in prayer, will never succeed, whatever talent, whatever wealth and influence, you may bring to bear on it; witness the expedition to the Niger; witness many other plans and schemes, swelling high with human grandeur and knowledge and philosophy—they have come to nothing, because they did not begin, and were not continued, and did not end in a spirit of prayer. And on the other hand, little beginnings, though for some time small and unobserved, like the cloud the prophet saw in the distant horizon, which, perhaps, was not perceived by any but himself, till it rose high and spread far, will always prosper in the spirit of prayer. The eye of faith is like a magnificent telescope, that magnifies, and enlarges, and brings objects within its view, invisible to the naked eye of carnal sense and reason; and in proportion as the prayer of faith is deep and strong, and the expectation of faith large, so shall our success be in anything we put our hands unto.

But our Saviour not only bids us "pray," He says, "pray the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." Here is an evidence of His Divinity, the full force of which, however, we are apt to lose, in consequence of the division of the Gospel into chapters; for we are accustomed to stop at the words of the text, without tracing their connection with that portion of the narrative that immediately follows. In the text, Jesus tells His disciples—"Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest;" and in the beginning of the very next chapter, it is added—"And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." These twelve Jesus sent forth. Here

there is the Lord of the harvest sending forth His labourers into the harvest. What a magnificent display is here of His power and Godhead! There is His melting tenderness; there is the pity of His manhood gushing forth from His eyes, when He saw the perishing multitudes. Here is His Divinity, and glorious power, and Godhead; the authoritative command of the Lord of the harvest bidding His labourers to go forth, as He afterwards did, on the day of His ascension into heaven—"Go ye, therefore, into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;" "lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." What will a Socinian say to this? How can he escape from it? The question here does not depend on translation or criticism—it is a fact. Christ tells His disciples to "pray to the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into His harvest;" and then He acts as "Lord of the harvest," by sending forth His apostles. As if He had said—Pray ye, therefore, to Me—to Me, as the Head of the Church—to Me, who alone can "give the Word, and great be the company of those who publish it."

What a beautiful exhibition you have here of your duty, *where* you are to direct your prayers! When your heart is heavy about yourselves, or about your sinful fellow creatures, pray to Jesus; direct your prayers to the glorified Immanuel, the God-man Christ Jesus, standing now, as at this season He is presented to us, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, His hand full of gifts—"out of His fulness all we receive, and grace for grace." He is indeed "the King of kings, and Lord of lords."—He has "ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, having received gifts for men," and now even the Spirit goes forth at His bidding, for He says—"Ask of Me, and I will send you the Holy Ghost the Comforter." Who can send God, the Spirit, but God the Son?

We have then, here, distinct instruction to whom we are to pray; but then, once more, our Lord tells us what we are to pray for. "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." Observe the weighty and important expression here used, as indicating the character of those for whom we are to pray—not for idlers, but for labourers. The title He gives, and

the figure He uses, mark the character of every faithful pastor; whether he go to the perishing heathen, or among the Jews, or among the denseness of pollution at home, or to the dismal shores of our distant colonies, he is to be a labourer. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will send out" laborious men, devoted men, faithful men, who will be about their Master's business—men with the light of the Spirit, and the love of Christ—men who will know nothing but Jesus, and preach nothing but Jesus among the perishing and guilty—"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest"—faithful labourers. There is something very expressive in the original word, translated "send forth." It means *thrust forth*, as if they were reluctant to go, as though love of home restrained them, and its tender affections kept them back. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will thrust forth labourers into His harvest." It oftentimes happens that the most exemplary labourers were the least disposed to go. Jeremiah said, "I am a child, I cannot speak to them;" and Isaiah said, "I am a man of unclean lips;" and Moses said, "Send, I pray thee, by the hand of Him whom Thou wilt send," and no one says—"Here am I, send me," until the Lord of the harvest thrusts him out, fits him for his work, calls him to it, impels him to it by the Spirit of God, so that he can no longer contain the fire kindled, and at last he speaks with his tongue.

And then, again, observe the importance of this expression—"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." It is "the Lord of the harvest" alone, who can send such "labourers into His harvest." Men may choose and select, the Church may appoint, bishops may ordain, but if the Lord the Spirit do not quicken and call them, they will not be sent of God, nor will their work be accepted and blessed. There is no form of ordination, no system of ecclesiastical discipline, that can secure the blessing. As I have often said to the Baptists, who hold immersion and adult baptism—"if you can show me any form of baptism, that invariably carries along with it a spiritual blessing, I will come and be baptized myself." And so of holy orders, and all those subjects that distract the Church of God—if you can show me any of those ceremonies and orders that invariably secure a blessing,

I will adopt it, and uniformly hold it; but as there is no tying or fettering the blessing of God on any particular form of the Church's ordinances, while we adhere to the rites and ordinances of our Church, what we want is, men not only sent of men, and of the Church, but sent of God—"that the Lord may send forth labourers into His harvest." See you, then, the duty which your Divine teacher inculcates upon you—that you should pray to Him incessantly who alone can do it, that He would be pleased thus to find for us men fit and efficient to go to the east and the west, to the north and the south, and tell wherever there are sorrowing, ignorant, perishing, guilty sinners, of a Saviour's love.

But now, beloved brethren, I must add, that, if we stop here, we shall fall very far short of the Saviour's instruction and injunction, and prove ourselves to be guilty, alike of insensibility and hypocrisy. If, while we pretend to weep over the sorrows of our fellow creatures, and carry our wishes to the throne of grace on their behalf, we do nothing more, we are hypocrites in the sight of God. How do we learn this from the passage before us? Why, from the fact that the twelve apostles went out, and from that time became labourers in this harvest. They not only prayed that God would send out labourers, but they went themselves, and devoted themselves willingly, to the blessed work of the salvation of souls. Now it is probable I am addressing many to-night, who cannot so far fulfil their Lord's injunction, as to go themselves; but there is a great mistake even on this point, brethren. You are every one of you called to be missionaries. Every man, woman, and child, has a little orbit; and within the circumference of that orbit you are all "to let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." This is a responsibility from which you cannot escape. Every person that possesses the light himself, is bound to enlighten his neighbour, his family, his friends, and thus to do what in him lies, and he can do much with little trouble to himself and with small sacrifice, for the evangelization of the world and the well being of his fellow creatures. It is one of the blessed circumstances of the times in which we live, that persons of humble and moderate talent, and persons who have not a

great deal of education, or great outward advantages, may still become most useful servants of God. A humble mechanic, one of the persons of whom I just now spoke, who is admitted to be one of the most efficient schoolmasters in a distant colony, was a gentleman's servant, humbly educated; but constantly bent on improving himself, he soon became a very well-informed, carefully instructed, and capable monitor and teacher of others.

But we are expressly met to-night, to encourage some who are working in this blessed occupation here at home. Let me, in order to show its claims on your support, explain the character of this institution a little more fully.

And, first of all, it is a most interesting characteristic, that it is a combination of young men. There are many young men combined in the present day—confederates in vice, who form themselves into societies for pleasure and amusement; others form themselves into literary and philosophic institutions; others for political purposes, of a questionable, if not mischievous character. But how pleasing it is, to see young men confederated for God; forming a holy alliance against sin, the world, and the devil—a benevolent confederacy and communion whereby they may stir one another, especially among those of their own age and situation in life, in every good word and work! I say, the mere fact of their being young men, is interesting, and we know that God himself stoops from heaven, to smile on the young that give themselves to Him. Shall the prime of our life not be devoted to God? Shall we not give the meridian of our life to Him? Shall we come to God with what is fit for nothing else? God forbid. Let every one then, in the vigour of his days, consecrate himself to God, and exert himself for the honour and glory of His great name.

Another striking and encouraging feature of this institution, is that it was begun in prayer. "Pray ye,"—that was its commencement. Two or three young men prayed together, to find out some way in which they might be useful to their fellow-creatures. They probably had but little of this world's goods; they thought they could give their time, their influence, their prayers, and thus arose this humble and retiring institution.

Observe next, how excellently well the efforts of their benevolence have been directed to these four points—those four

great divisions of human guilt I have indicated to you—the Gentile, and the Jew, the heathen and the Israelites, our brethren at home, and our colonists abroad. This feature of the Institution is somewhat peculiar, and extremely delightful. I am sorry to say some persons support different institutions, from party spirit; and one says, 'I am for the Jews,' another, 'I am for the Gentiles;' a third despises all foreign operations, and says, 'I am for the people at home.' Now all these are wrong. We may wish to direct our energies chiefly to some one particular department of Christian benevolence, but no one ought to be so absorbed in his favourite Society, that it should become the Shibboleth of party. Thus are apt to arise jealousies and heartburnings, and I have myself felt so much the importance of avoiding such a state of things, that in our Missionary Society, which has now existed fifteen years, the sum collected is equally divided between the Jews and Gentiles. Christ has taught us that "there is neither Jew nor Greek;" and these narrow, beggarly, mean, contemptible distinctions ought to be done away in Christ. Every soul is equally precious to Him. I want to see every wall of partition broken down, and the whole family of man brought into one covenant with God; they are equally acceptable to Him, if they come through the blood of Christ, seeking mercy. I do, therefore, greatly rejoice in this humble institution; in that there are four branches growing on one stem, nourished by the same root, the same sap circulating through them, and all bearing the same precious fruit.

And now suffer me to address one word to the members of this Society themselves. I would venture, then, my dear young friends, to offer you one word of caution, as well as of encouragement.

First of all, I would say, keep up the character of your institution—let it ever be a young men's Institution. And with this view, let me recommend to you that there be a distinct membership within a certain limit of age. Otherwise, as God spares you to grow older, you will not like to leave the Institution, and other Institutions will interfere with it. Let others be subscribers and contributors, but let it ever be a young men's Society, and obliquely direct your efforts to young men, and those of your own sphere. In this way your Institution will have a se-

parate and independent character, jostling no other, interfering with no other.

With reference to the books you circulate, a large sphere is open to you. There are few books of voyages and travels published now, but contain something respecting the missionaries. Those, especially, written by naval and military officers, are now imbued with a tone of morality, and deep respect for religion, of which they were formerly destitute. This is very encouraging. Begin with these. And then I would strongly recommend you to cultivate science and human philosophy along with the books you circulate. It is thus the mind of man will be sanctified, and the power of the human understanding and genius consecrated to God. I would be far from philosophizing Christianity, but I should like to Christianize philosophy, and that is the duty of every good man in the present day. Do not let him attempt to repress the inquiring spirit of men's minds, but guide and direct it. If you put pressure on the safety-valve of a steam engine you will burst the boiler; rather let us direct the power into a harmless useful channel.

These observations I submit to you in all affection and interest in your blessed undertaking; and now let me address a word or two, to those who are not members of this institution. I appeal to you on behalf of those four societies I have named to you. I trust you love them, and will cheerfully give of your substance, as you have often done before, to their support. I cannot forget that I am speaking to-night, in what I may consider an almost consecrated pulpit, and within the walls of a Church, out of which the Lord hath sent many labourers into His harvest. I call to mind the services of one who long laboured among you—I may say, almost the father of the Church Missionary Society—I mean Mr. Pratt, and of him who still survives and labours among you, the zealous and active friend of the missionary cause. I cannot but think you will show your love to this glorious cause. I ask you to encourage your young friends, to stamp your approbation on their Institution, to say to them "I do of good courage, God is with you of a truth," and you cannot do this more truly and sincerely, than by giving liberally of your substance, as God hath prospered you.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. G. F. W. MORTIMER, D.D.

PREACHED AT ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW, ON MONDAY EVENING,
MAY 12, 1845.

One of the Annual Sermons on behalf of the London Missionary Society.

"Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them."—Acts xviii. 9—12.

I do not purpose on this occasion to enter at any length into the claims of the Missionary cause, nor to delay you by a statement of the grounds on which I believe that every Christian man is bound to support it. This subject is one which you have often heard discussed, and I would fain persuade myself that there is not a single person here, who does not acknowledge that he is Christ's servant, and under a solemn obligation to be employed about his Master's work; who does not go further, and feel from his heart's inmost core, that all that Christ has stated to be his work, all that Christ has thought worthy of his interest and regard, is matter about which he has no right to be indifferent, and in the performance of which he dares not be inactive.

On these simple grounds we would rest our appeal to you to-night. You are the servants of a Master who has given you a solemn charge, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." This charge you are bound to obey, for it has never been annulled; it never will be annulled while the present state of things exists; the very language of our blessed Lord, "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world" forbids your entertaining such a thought: it never can be annulled while the obligation on which it rests remains in force, "all power is given unto Me in heaven and earth," *therefore, go ye forth and teach My Word unto the nations.* No, brethren, the commandment will have an end; but that end is not yet. Until all enemies have been put under His feet, until He himself has descended from the mediatorial throne, and "delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, that

God may be all in all"—until that hour the office which belongs to Christ's glorified humanity is not completed, and the duties which devolve upon His servants are binding upon them as individuals and as Churches.

We use the word Churches in its proper sense, to designate "congregations of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same;" without any reference to their mode of government. Questions of Church government possess indeed a relative importance, but they enter not into the essence of Christianity. All that is necessary to constitute Christian men or Christian Churches has been made matter of distinct revelation; and I at least as a minister of the Church of England am bound by her own authoritative statement, that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

The duty of Christian Churches consists of three parts. It includes, first, the edification of the saints—the building up of those who have embraced the truth in sincerity and love, until they "all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Secondly, the religious oversight and instruction of those, who either are yet from age incapable of giving evidence that they have received the truths of the Gospel into their hearts, or who, though of mature years, have never yet supplied that evidence by their life and conversation. Thirdly, the evangelization of the heathen world. And this, being, as we have al-

ready seen, expressly commanded by our blessed Lord, is as much a part of Christian duty as either of the other parts, and rests upon the same grounds of obligation. It was long neglected by the Protestant Churches generally; but the neglect is felt to have been a sin and a disgrace. During the last half century a spirit has moved upon the slumbering waters of the Christian world, and forms of life have risen from them—Missionary Societies, each individually expressing the religious feeling, and concentrating the missionary efforts of this or that denomination of Christians: one of them, the London Missionary Society combining the united energy of all in one common cause. The object of that Society is thus simply stated, "The sole object is to spread the knowledge of Christ among heathen and other unenlightened nations:" and its fundamental principle is set forth in the following declaration, "As the union of Christians of various denominations, in carrying on this great work, is a most desirable object; so to prevent, if possible, any cause of future dissension, it is declared to be a *fundamental principle* of the Missionary Society, that its design is not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy, or any other form of Church order and government, (about which there may be difference of opinion among serious persons,) but the glorious Gospel of the blessed God to the heathen; and that it shall be left (as it ought to be left) to the minds of the persons whom God may call into the fellowship of His Son from among them, to assume for themselves such form of Church government as to them shall appear most agreeable to the Word of God."

And with this object in view, and this principle as its guide, the London Missionary Society has pursued its way through evil report and good report, from the first feeble efforts of a few holy men till, at the close of fifty years, it can exhibit its labours of love in Asia, in Africa, in the West Indies, and in the Islands of the sea; it can point in all these countries to the precious fruits of immortal souls ripening unto the harvest of the last great day; it can enumerate 439 stations and connected with them 131 Churches, where 166 European Missionaries and 603 European and native assistants are employed in publishing the glad tidings of salvation to those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of eternal death. Surely,

brethren, when we look at these facts, we may exclaim, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad!" But He has given us too our portion of trials, and to these we now propose to direct your attention. The passage of Scripture which we have selected for our text speaks of trials, and shows us that even an apostolic ministry was not exempted from them; that St. Paul had to encounter not only the opposition of the heathen, but the still more determined enmity of those who ought to have been his brethren and helpers.

We propose, on the present occasion, first, to trace a parallel between the trials of St. Paul connected with his ministry to the Corinthian Church, and those trials which have lately assailed the London Missionary Society in its work of evangelizing the Islands of the Pacific; secondly, to inquire what are the possible causes which may have rendered such trials needful; thirdly, to ascertain the grounds of encouragement which still exist; fourthly, and lastly, to show from the example of the apostle, what is the path of duty to be pursued, under circumstances of no ordinary difficulty.

I. First, then, St. Paul immediately on his arrival at Corinth, began to preach the Gospel to Jew and Gentile indiscriminately; to those who knew the one true God, and professed their belief in Him, and to those who were still in the darkness of heathenism. And which of these parties was the more ready to receive the truth? The Jews opposed themselves and blasphemed; so that he was driven to say, "Your blood be upon your own heads: I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." But we pass on a step in the history of his mission; we pass to his two epistles to the Corinthians; and what do we find in them? That he had to maintain a continued struggle, not only against Jews, but still more against Judaizing Christian teachers—against men who sought to set his converts against him, and to introduce among them forms of bondage incompatible with Christian liberty—men who desired it to be believed, that the Gospel which was taught by Peter at Jerusalem was a different Gospel from that which Paul preached, and that its true meaning and interpretation were committed to themselves alone—men who denied his authority as an apostle, and persuaded the Corinthians to say, "We are of Cephas;"

'we hold the ritual observances of the law to be needful, in addition to the Gospel of Christ.' The spirit of Popery was alive then, and St. Paul had to encounter it at Corinth. The mystery of iniquity was already at work, although as yet but imperfectly developed. And what, brethren, has been your great opponent in your missionary work? That same spirit of Antichrist, which was in the world even in the apostle's time. You have rightly said in your last Report, that it is not with idolatry alone, that the arduous contest must henceforth be maintained; but that "Popery—that old and inveterate antagonist of Christian light and liberty—has put on the giant strength of former years, and resolves to contest with Protestant piety every continent and every island which we seek to bless with the knowledge of salvation." Whithersoever the Christian missionary goes forth, his steps are dogged by the emissaries of Rome; wherever the blessed truths of the Gospel are preached, there Romish errors and superstitions are their present antagonists. The history of the Tahiti Mission, proves that Rome has power to oppose your onward progress, and that she will use it as *ruthlessly* and *unscrupulously* as heretofore. For this struggle, then, you must be prepared.

II. But trial ill answers its purpose, if it does not lead to careful self-examination; and we are sure, brethren, that in your case the question has been often and anxiously asked, 'Why has God thus dealt with us? What is the lesson which He intends to teach us? We looked upon the vine that our hands had planted; it seemed to have taken deep root, and to have filled the land. "The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs were like the goodly cedars. Why hast Thou, then, broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The bear out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it." This, brethren, we beleave to have been the language of your hearts. Bear with us, then, while we inquire, in the second place, what are the possible causes which may have rendered such trials needful. We pass by those general causes which always exist, and which are mixed up with everything human. Such are want of singleness of purpose; reliance upon self, rather than upon God; the indolence resulting from success; and

many others. These, alas! are never absent, either from individuals or Churches; and these require the stern discipline of occasional chastisement, for the better training of both in their respective duties.

But it seems as though recent events were intended to teach one essential lesson—the real character and real power of Popery. This, brethren, we believe was in part forgotten by you, and in part unknown. Ten years ago, you would have smiled at the very idea of danger to your missions from the assaults of Popery. You would have smiled at the suggestion, that its ascendancy might even possibly at some future time endanger the religion and the liberties of England. The high civilization of this country was looked upon as a safeguard; its free institutions were looked upon as a safeguard; and Popery was regarded as a sort of shadowy existence, a death without its dart, so changed and modified by time and circumstances, that its once fatal energy was all gone. But this shadow has been found to be a reality—a powerful reality. How should it be otherwise? What is Popery? The religion of human nature.

While human nature is the same, it must be the same. While man's hostility to the Gospel of Jesus Christ continues; while his pride and self-sufficiency continue; while his love for the external form, rather than for the internal power of godliness continues to exist; while all this remains the same, Popery will remain the same. And when you add to this the most subtle system of worldly policy that ever was devised, can you believe that Popery will ever cease to be formidable? I see around me many Christian ministers. Now take but a survey of your own congregations. The truly converted are your only dependence. What proportion do they bear to those who have convictions of sin, without the desire of parting with sin?—who would rather submit to any external mortification, than set about the far more difficult work of seeking to attain unto internal holiness; who have just such a dread of future judgment, as leads them to cry out with Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," without endeavouring to live the life of the righteous upon earth. And what are all these, but ready prepared Papists?—men who would gladly take refuge in a religion of

forms and ceremonies, from the doubts and fears which assail them—men who only are not Papists, because they have not yet been exposed to the contact of Popery, or because they cannot persuade themselves that those doctrines are true, which they would gladly believe if they could,—which their reason rejects, but to which their will consents. It was, perhaps, needful, my brethren, in order that you should see Popery in its true character, and form a just estimate of its real energy and power—it was, perhaps, needful, that it should be allowed to assail you in the most tender point; that it should be permitted, by God's over-ruling providence, to stain one of your fairest fields of missionary labour with the blood of its Christian inhabitants, and to change a land of Bibles and of Churches into a desolate wilderness.

Let not the lesson be lost upon you; but if you value your civil and religious liberty; if you look back with thankfulness upon that general gael-delivery of the human mind, which was effected by the blessed Reformation; if you love the Gospel of Christ, and are resolved, God being your helper, to uphold it in its simplicity and purity; if you regard your Bibles as your best inheritance, and are determined, as you received it from your fathers, so to hand it down to your children's children; if you seek to preserve your missionary stations from anti-Christian and fatal error, then look upon Popery as the antagonist principle which opposes you in the possession of all these blessings, and against which you must never cease to struggle. We would not say to you, interfere with civil rights; for civil rights are inalienable, and never, in our opinion, to be interfered with upon religious grounds, since what is morally wrong, cannot be religiously right; but we do say, Never, under any imaginable circumstances, or to attain any imaginable good, ally yourselves for one moment with Popery; nor cease for one moment to regard it as your most inveterate enemy.

III. We proceed, thirdly, to ascertain the grounds of encouragement which still exist. "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night, by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." And does He not, my brethren, speak to us? and does He not

speak the same language? It is true, that we have no direct revelation that God has "much people" at any one of our Missionary stations; but we have a revelation, that "as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall His Word be, that goeth forth out of His mouth; it shall not return unto Him void, but it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto He sent it." It is true, that we have not a Paul to our ministry; but we remember, that when Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven, Elisha "took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither." And we believe, that the same Gospel which St. Paul preached, when he "determined not to know anything at Corinth, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," will be effectual from the lips of our missionaries; will still be found, "unto them which are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

But let us look for a moment more closely to the topics of encouragement which our text suggests. "Be not afraid, for I am with thee," was an especial revelation to the apostle. But in what point does this declaration differ from that general declaration made to Christ to all His ministering servants—to all who in after ages should preach His Gospel to the heathen—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?" It is but the application of an universal promise to a particular instance. And that universal promise belongs to us; we have a right to employ it for our own encouragement, to stay ourselves in the hour of trial with the assurance of Christ's continued presence, and to exclaim with the psalmist, "In God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me."

Then, again, it was an essential revelation to St. Paul—"I have much people in this city." But we, too, have a general revelation of His purposes. It is written—"Even all the isles of the heathen shall worship Him." And the as-

sembly of the redeemed is described as a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues." Can we, then, doubt, when we look upon the unconverted millions of China; upon the fields of Hindostan, already whitening to the harvest, upon the islands that gem the eastern and the western wave—can we doubt but that Christ has "much people" there? May we not rest on the assurance, that we are fellow-workers with Him, and that we are employed in carrying out His own mighty purposes—those purposes, with reference to which He directs the course of providence, and sits upon the mediatorial throne, and sways the sceptre of the world? Here, then, is our second ground of encouragement—whatever trials surround us or await us, those who are "fellow-workers with God," we know, brethren, that they must be successful.

Once more: it was an especial revelation to St. Paul—"No man shall set on thee to hurt thee." We dare not apply this promise to ourselves in its literal sense, for it is not long since the blood of one of our missionaries was shed; it is not long, since the native teachers in the Isle of Pines were massacred; and our blessed Lord may yet require it of others, that in order to inherit the "crown of life," they should first "be faithful unto death." But there is a sense, and the best sense too, in which we can and will apply the promise; and our warrant for so doing, shall be the conduct and the language of the apostle himself. Let us follow him from Corinth to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Rome. Men *have* "set on him to hurt him;" he is a prisoner in bonds. What, then, has he to say respecting the trials that encompass him? Does he complain, or does he rejoice? Does he think that they have hindered his usefulness, or does he assert that they have increased it? Hear his own words, addressed to his Philippian converts:—"I would," he says, "ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace and in all other places." Oh! wonderful result! The palace of the Roman emperor, which as a freeman he could not have entered—that palace bears fruit under the ministry "of Paul the aged, and now

also a prisoner of Jesus Christ." Bears fruit, did we say? Yes, bears it so abundantly, that the apostle could conclude his epistle to the Philippians thus,—"All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household." There is not, we believe, a more wonderful passage in the history of God's providence, than that which recounts how a British princess, (Claudia,) herself a captive at Rome, received from St. Paul the knowledge of the Gospel. The prisoners of Jerusalem and of Britain, of the East and of the West, were brought together, to win one soul to Christ. Here, then, is another ground of encouragement. In one sense, and that, as we have before observed, the best sense, the Lord says to each of our missionaries, "No man shall set on thee to hurt thee." On the contrary, "I will make the wrath of man to praise Me;" it shall be for the furtherance of the Gospel, and shall leave a blessing instead of a curse behind it. Who knows but that the disturbers of the Tahiti mission may have been brought thither by God's good providence, to hear His Word, and to be converted by it?

IV. We proceed, lastly, to consider the path of duty. The commandment to the apostle was—"Speak, and hold not thy peace." And he obeyed it, "continuing in Corinth a year and six months, and teaching the Word of God among them." "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," was the only weapon which he opposed to the fury of the blasphemer. "The sword of the Spirit," my brethren, is our weapon too. The circumstances under which the ministry of the Gospel must henceforth be carried on in Tahiti, may be, and in all probability will be, most trying. The missionaries must lay their account to be often misunderstood, and always misrepresented; to be charged with fomenting disturbances, and exciting the hostility of the natives against the French government, and to be exposed, in consequence of such charges, to a multitude of petty and vexatious annoyances. What must be their conduct? They must bear continually in mind, that the one object of the Society is, "to spread the knowledge of Christ;" they must permit themselves in no other duty; they must put a check even upon their natural and praiseworthy affections; they must repress the tear of sympathy, and lock up within their breasts the in-

dignant feelings which the sight of injustice and oppression cannot fail to arouse. For the Gospel's sake, these feelings must be subdued, not only in order that by "well-doing, they may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," but that, if it be possible, they may win some of them to Christ. The task prescribed is a hard one, for a Briton and a Christian. A hatred of oppression is indigenous to us, and that hatred will burn with more intensity, in the heart that glows with universal charity and love, and "honours all men," as the Gospel has commanded. But, hard as it is, we feel assured that the result will fully justify those expectations which we have formed respecting the future conduct of the missionaries; we feel assured that they will remain quietly and confidently at their posts, teaching the Word of God, and trusting in the power of that Word to overcome opposition and smooth the ruggedness of their path; embracing every opportunity of usefulness that may offer, and exhibiting in their own conduct a beautiful illustration of our blessed Lord's commandment, "Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

And what, my Christian friends, is our duty? Are we not missionaries though we remain at home? Yes, for the man who has not a mission, who does not feel and know that he has a mission upon earth, is neither a part of Christ's kingdom, nor a member of His Church, nor a living stone in His spiritual temple; yea, "though he have a name that he liveth, he is dead"—dead to every purpose of his being and existence. We too have a mission. And what is our mission? As regards ourselves, to form our characters for eternity; to trace upon them those indelible lineaments which will be our own for ever, and which will constitute us what we are, "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," or "vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory." As regards other men, to feel for them, to act for them, to bear our part in the promotion of universal good. And, highest still, as regards Christ, to labour diligently that His name may be glorified, and His kingdom may be enlarged. This is our mission. Let us contemplate it as it is set

forth in Scripture. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light;" and let us awake to all the responsibilities with which, as Christians, we are invested. We cannot shake them off, even if we would; they are a very part of our spiritual life.

But we do not wish to shake them off, rather, by the help of God, we desire to fulfil them. If, then, we would mould our own characters in love, that love which is the chief of Christian graces, because it "never faileth," let our sympathy, our prayers, our contributions, be given to our brethren who labour in the missionary cause; let their sorrows and their joys be ours; let us "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." If we would do good in our age and generation, let us seek above all things to "bring men from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God," let us pity the millions of idolaters who sit "fast bound in misery and iron," without Christ and without hope, either for the present life, or for the life which is to come, and let us join in sending the missionary forth, to preach to them that word of power, which is able to convert and save the soul.

If, finally, we love "Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood," then let us, above all things, be anxious to devote our time, our talents, our wealth, our energies, to His service; let us regard the very existence of idolatry, as a matter which demands our personal and individual efforts, and let us never rest satisfied, until the millions, who now "worship they know not what" have heard the name of Christ, and have believed in Him, unto life eternal. His enemies still contest with Him the dominion of the world. Idolatry, Popery, and Infidelity, march, each under its own banner, and array each its subjects for the conflict. May we be neutral? Hear what God answers,—"Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord; curse ye utterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

LUTHER.

THE mind of Luther seemed to become more and more impressed with the infinite importance of the Gospel, as he continued, from day to day, to preach its doctrines. It was this alone, which could have kept him from falling into the snares which are ever prepared by the devil for the destruction of such men. The increase of spiritual zeal is not always accompanied with a proportionable humility of heart and sense of personal deficiency. There is hardly evidence enough to lead us to believe that such would have been the case with our great reformer. Had he taken his own wisdom as a guide,—had he simply yielded to the impulses of his inner being, however noble in their origin, however splendid the object proposed as their end, he would, before half his course was run, have degenerated into a proud and ambitious sectarist. But he had adopted the Word of God for his guide and rule. The movements of his mind were directed by its powerful counsels; the temptations of his heart to selfishness were checked by the vastness of its promises. In whatever he did, he could not escape from the responsibility which belonged to him as a minister of heavenly truth. To have regarded himself as a teacher sent from God, would, but for the Bible, have ruined him, as it has done others. It was as a teacher of Scripture, as one raised up to make known its doctrines, its value and authority, and in no other character whatever, that he effected, by the will of God, the mighty changes to which the Church owes its liberation.

It was not in the enjoyment of that vigour of frame, and buoyancy of spirits, which will sometimes carry a man forward by their own force, that Luther performed his work. He suffered greatly both from sickness and frequent depression of mind. At the meeting held at Smalcalde, his disorders made so fearful an inroad on his constitution, that little hope was entertained of his recovery. In the midst of his agony he exclaimed, "Lord God! behold I die! an enemy of Thine enemy; the curse and the cursed of Thine enemy, and the Antichrist of the Pope, in order that we may both be judged on that day;—he, indeed, Thine enemy and Antichrist, to be punished with eternal shame and pain; but I, Thy poor creature, who acknowledge openly Thy name and majesty, to inherit eternal glory and dominion." On lamenting that his sickness had happened when he was so far from his family, the Elector comforted him with the assurance that none of those who were dear to him should suffer need. "Your wife," said he, shall be my wife, and your children my children." His letter to Pomeranus breathed the tenderest spirit of affection. "Greet my Catherine," he says, and tell her that she must bear my departure with patience. Let her remember how we have lived together in peace and happiness for twelve years. She has not only been to me a true and faithful wife, but has served me even as a handmaid. God reward "her in that day." In another passage he says, "I am ready to die, if such be the will of my Redeemer Jesus Christ; yet I would fain live till Whitsuntide, that I might strike still harder the Romish beasts, the Pope and his kingdom, in open conflict for the whole world."

In the first moment of comparative ease, Luther prepared to leave Smalcalde. He was induced to make the attempt, it is said, not simply from his desire to reach home, but to escape the presence of the Roman legate, wishing, as he expressed it, not to be left in the devil's lodge. The pain which he suffered was at times so great, that he would exclaim, "Oh! that even a Turk were here to slay me!" But, by God's blessing on the supplications of his anxious friends, and the care of the Elector, his malady was subdued, and the Protestants expressed themselves on the occasion as some rejoicing in the restoration of a venerated father. Thanksgivings were publicly offered up by the clergy, and the Elector again addressed him with assurances of affectionate friendship.—(*From the Continuation of Milner's History of the Church of Christ, by the Rev. Henry Stebbing.*)

MAYNOOTH.

SPEECH

OF THE

REV. R. J. M'GHEE, M.A.,

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION, HELD IN THE LARGE ROOM, EXETER HALL, ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1845, THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WINCHELSEA IN THE CHAIR.

MY LORD, Before I enter upon that subject, on which I feel it my painful, but solemn duty to bear my testimony this day, I think it right to say, that my reverend brother and I have not voluntarily obtruded ourselves upon the notice of this great meeting. We stand here at the request of the Committee of the Protestant Association. I can only say for myself, that in my life I never felt so much the deep responsibility that rests upon me; for whether we consider the magnitude of the principle that is involved in this question, or the intense public interest that has been excited; the long discussion which it has undergone in the House of Commons, or the eager expectation with which the eyes of all this empire are directed to its result; we may say, that there never was a measure proposed in England, for which a deeper responsibility rested both on its advocates and its opponents, than the endowment of the College of Maynooth.

There is one difficulty that no doubt naturally presents itself—perhaps to all the individuals of this great meeting—connected with the subject, and that is, what can remain to be said upon the subject of Maynooth? It has undergone an unprecedented discussion in the House of Commons; the talents of the representatives of the whole empire have been exhausted upon this subject; and what can more remain for learning, discovery, or ingenuity to invent, to say about Maynooth? My lord, I take a very different view of this subject. For, in my judgment, so far from having been exhausted, the merits of this question have never been discussed in the House of Commons. And this, I confess, presents to my mind one of the darkest features of the iniquity of this measure; that so far from having been discussed, the merits of this question have not been permitted to be discussed in the House of Commons. Some inquisitorial influence, unknown to the British constitution, has been exerted over the British Cabinet; and that Cabinet has avowedly quashed that discussion on the very threshold of that House.

For what is this question, my lord?

what are the merits of this question? what is the question itself? The prime minister proposes to endow the College of Maynooth, for the education of a certain class of men. Now it must strike every plain honest man, on the first blush of the thing, that the very first question is, What is this system of education which the prime minister proposes to endow? That is the question. Every other point is merely an accident of the question; but that is the question itself. Now what does the prime minister do? He comes down to the House of Commons, and he says—"I propose to bring in a bill for the endowment of this College; but the grace of this act shall not be qualified by any inquiry into the principles of the College to be endowed!" Now we know that it is generally—universally the case—that all institutions for public education are anxious to proclaim the system on which they instruct. Even a school-master, if he puts an advertisement in the paper, is anxious to proclaim the course of instruction he wishes to adopt in his seminary. It must be certainly, my lord, a very equivocal, or a very suspicious mode of training the mind of youth, which this is an act of grace to conceal from the public view. To whom is this act of grace? On whom is it conferred? Is it on the nation, or on the system? Perhaps upon the nation. Perhaps the minister considers that the illumination of Maynooth is too bright; that it would dazzle the empire; that

"Its salubrious rays are too bright,
To hit the senso of human sight."

Or is it an act of grace to the system? Does the prime minister suspect—does the prime minister believe? does the prime minister know that that system will not bear the light; and therefore he will graciously conceal it from the view of the public? Does he mean to say, to this great protestant empire—"I choose to endow this College; it may sap your constitution, it may supersede your laws, it may supplant your religion, it may subvert your throne, but you shall not inquire into the nature of it?" In what school has the prime minister of England

begin to learn such an unstatesman-like, unconstitutional, unpatriotic, un-English, unpresbyterian mode of legislation? One would imagine that he had passed some part of the last terms from parliament in retreat in the College of Maynooth; that they had invested him with an honorary degree of Doctor of Canon Law; and that he had been studying *Reichthum* or *Devoti* upon the subject. The doctrine of the secret may do very well for the meridian of Italy, but, thank God, that as yet, neither in the church, nor in the constitution, shall it find place within the atmosphere of England.

My honourable friends, the member for Kent, and the member for Newcastle-under-Lyme, endeavoured on the 2d. of this month to force some discussion of this subject in the House of Commons, and they rendered great service to the cause of truth, for they elicited an impotent and irritated denial of the most demonstrable facts; and what did the prime minister do? Sir E. Peel stated that "he also" (as well as the Roman Catholic gentleman who preceded him,) "had heard the discussion that had just taken place, with great pain; for of all assemblies, he thought that was the least fitted to discuss questions of this nature." I confess, I read that sentence, coming from such a quarter, with the most profound astonishment. I thought that the business of a legislative assembly, was most carefully and diligently to discuss every question, on which it was to legislate for the empire. But the only possible conclusion that can be drawn from the assertion of the Right Honourable Baronet, is this, that the House of Commons must be totally incompetent to legislate upon a question, which, by his own confession, it is utterly unfitted to discuss.

I feel, in entering upon the subject which I am now about to speak of, the deepest and most solemn regret; for struck as I am opposed to this iniquitous and obnoxious measure, I wish I could oppose it as I ought to do, without casting the least reflection on the Right Hon. Baronet at the head of Her Majesty's Government. But a solemn sense of duty to my God and to my country, compels me to bear my testimony upon this subject, while, however humble that testimony may be, I greatly miscalculate the sterling public principles of England,—I greatly miscalculate the power of public opinion,—I greatly miscalculate the force of truth when brought to bear on any man in this empire,—if the Right Hon. Baronet will

not be brought to feel, that instead of bringing forward his motion for the third reading of this bill on Monday next, he will find that it is due to his country and to himself, rather to bring in a bill to investigate the College of Maynooth, and those laws which have been set up by the papal bishops of Ireland, against the laws of that Sovereign who has entrusted him with the administration of her Government.

It was the twentieth of this month, ten years ago, that my dear and reverend brother Dr. O'Sullivan and I first stood upon this platform to bear our testimony concerning certain principles and documents of the church of Rome, which appeared to all who heard and all who were acquainted with the subject, to involve most deeply the civil, social, political, and religious interests of this great empire. Circumstances led from one discovery to another. Then facts were elicited, truths and documents were discovered, statements were made year after year, which remain to this hour uncontroverted and incontrovertible, respecting the Papacy, of which I will say that no man—I care not what his talents may be—is fit to bear a part in the administration of this great empire, who is not master of these facts, and who has not spirit and principle to deal with them.

Now I felt it my duty, as the documents had come into my hands,—I thank God they have been now for some time lodged in both universities—from that year, to write on many occasions to Sir Robert Peel. I was most anxious that these facts should be brought under the cognizance of that right hon. baronet. I knew perfectly well that it was quite impossible that a person in his high position, could notice any statement, however important, that had been made in a public meeting such as these held in Exeter Hall. I knew it was impossible that a person in his high position could condescend to notice any communication from an individual so insignificant as I am. But I earnestly requested the Right hon. bart. to appoint in Ireland some of the most learned and able lawyers; that he would request that they should investigate the documents; that they should examine the subject; that they should give to him their opinion on the nature and importance of these facts. I requested that the Rt. hon. bart. would appoint any persons he pleased in London—men of the station, and talent, and information that he would employ, and that he would desire them to investigate

the subject, and I professed myself most anxious to lay before them any information I could, so that he might know and understand the real state of the case, and what he had to deal with in the administration of this great empire. The Rt. hon. bart. condescendingly acknowledged my communications; but he most peremptorily refused ever to institute the least inquiry into the subject. I did not keep copies of any letters; I never thought or intended to mention them, I never thought I should be called on to do so; but before this was introduced into parliament, I took the liberty of writing a letter to the Right hon. bart. on the 26th of March, of which I did keep a copy, and which I think, however insignificant the writer, considering the personage to whom it was addressed, it is important to lay before this meeting and the British public.

To SIR ROBERT PEEL.

SIR—Permit me most respectfully to solicit your attention to facts, which I trust may seem to you of sufficient importance to apologize for this intrusion. Having seen in the proceedings of parliament the announcement of your intention to increase the grant to the college of Maynooth, an announcement which you perceive has caused a general feeling of excitement in the country, I should feel deficient in my duty were I not to lay before you facts which my knowledge of the system of instruction pursued in that college enables me to do; and of which authentic records of parliament will enable you, to a certain extent, to test the truth; which may perhaps suggest to you the importance of that satisfactory investigation of which the whole case is fully susceptible. Allow me to refer you to the 8th report of the Commissioners of Education ordered to be printed by the House of Commons June 19th, 1827. This report bearing the signatures of the Commissioners, with the appendix, contains the information to which I especially beg to direct your attention. There are just three points, out of a vast number, on which I would humbly request you to fix it.

I. The communication made and the directions given by the Cardinal-prefect of the Propaganda to the four Roman Catholic archbishops, and seven Roman Catholic bishops, trustees of the college of Maynooth, dated July 24th, 1798, the year after the institution of the college of Maynooth, App., No. 7, p. 44. together with the answer from those archbishops and bishops, bearing their signatures, pled-

ging themselves to adopt in that college the course directed by the Cardinal-prefect of the Propaganda. This immediately follows, p. 46.

II. The returns of the books used in the different classes of the college of Maynooth, and which the students are obliged to procure at their own expense. App. No. 65, p. 449.

III. A list of the works recommended by the professors of the Roman Catholic college of Maynooth for the perusal of the students, or referred to by them in their lectures. App. No. 67, p. 450. Now there seems to be little danger of acting unfairly or unjustly in taking their standards, principles, and books, on their own authority, thus lodged in the records of Parliament. In the first of these documents a certain course of instruction on certain peculiar points of difference between members of the church of Rome, and a certain standard on these points, is commanded by the Cardinal-prefect. The Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops pledge themselves to adopt this course. It is therefore but common sense to assume that the books which contain the principles of this course are those really adopted as the standards of instruction in the college, and that the principles to which the archbishops and bishops are pledged to the Propaganda are those which are really inculcated on the priests. I beg to inclose a statement of what those principles are, the certain essential points, and the means whereby you may satisfactorily prove whether that statement be true or false. It is of course your desire to legislate with the best information on the subject. I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your very obedient humble servant,

R. J. M'GHEE.

Dublin, March 26, 1848.

For the consideration of Sir R. Peel—
Statement of principles inculcated on certain points in the College of Maynooth.

If the letter of the Cardinal-prefect of the Propaganda addressed to the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops who are trustees of that College has been in these terms:—"You are to take care, that the course of instruction for the priesthood of Ireland in this college, shall be strictly according to the doctrines of the Ultra-montane church, that they are to be taught that kings and princes are subjected by the ordinance of God in temporal, as in spiritual things to the ecclesiastical power; that they may be directly or indirectly deposed by

the power of the keys of the church, and their subjects absolved from their fidelity and obedience, and their oaths of allegiance;" "you are to teach them that the power of the holy see is not to be restricted by the laws and institutions of the temporal power; that the temporal power is not to rule the spiritual, but the spiritual is at least indirectly, for the promotion of the spiritual good, to restrain the temporal;" "you are also to teach them to hold and maintain the personal infallibility of the Roman Pontiff; and for this purpose of training the students of the college in these principles, and training them according to these, to direct and govern the consciences of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, I recommend as the best guide for ecclesiastics, the compendium of theology by Peter Dens;" if the words of the Cardinal-prefect's letter were those which I have written; and that the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops of Ireland, pledged themselves to adhere to these commands; and that this letter was laid before you, and the facts demonstrated, that they had done what they were thus pledged to do: I do not suppose that Sir R. Peel would feel it consistent with duty to our gracious Sovereign, or the country, to propose an enlarged grant to a College pledged to such principles.

Now the principles commanded in the express terms of this letter, and the very book containing those principles, are the identical principles, and the identical book, which I have stated. The principal questions which the Cardinal-prefect states,—"quæ in scholarum disputationibus in utramque partem salva fide et pace versantur," are these. Every one acquainted with the subject knows that these are the questions which they say are not necessary to the Catholic faith, but which constitute the grand points of difference and disputation between the Gallican and Ultra-montane churches. These are the points in which the Cardinal renews the Roman hierarchy, and the hierarchy pledge themselves, to adopt as their leader and master Thomas Aquinas, and to take care he shall guide the College. If you turn to this appendix p. 144, you will perceive that the professor of ethics states the very work of Thomas Aquinas, which (according to this letter and the pledge of the bishops) he adopts, and which he recommends as "one of the best treatises of ethics," and on the list of books, p. 450, this book is given by the president as one of the standards of the College—the "*secunda secunda*."—Now the *Secunda*

Secunda of Thomas Aquinas is perfectly identical with the theology of Dens, the one being merely a digest and compendium of the other; when the one is commanded by the Cardinal-prefect, it is exactly the same as if he commanded the other: when the Bishops are pledged to one, they are pledged to the other; and how well they have fulfilled that pledge is demonstrated from the fact that since the year 1808, the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland had that book of Dens printed for their priests, to direct them, and as their guide when they left Maynooth; and since 1831 it is demonstrable from their own directories, and from the secret statutes of the province of Leinster, enacted by the Roman Catholic Bishops in Synod, that they framed their priests in that book as being the system they had already been taught in Maynooth, for the purpose of fitting them to direct by this standard the consciences of the Roman Catholic population. Now I undertake to prove the following facts as to the principles inculcated in the class books and standards of the College of Maynooth, as returned by the president in the Appendix.

"I. *On oaths.* First, that the doctrine of all their books on the subject of oaths is this, that the bishops have the power of dispensing with every sort of oath by which the conscience of a Roman Catholic can be bound in any obligation, when the bishop considers that the interest of the church of religion may require it; and that no Roman Catholic, who really believes the principles of his church, could hold his conscience bound to observe an oath which his bishop or priest taught him ought to have no obligation on his conscience.

"II. *On intolerance and persecution.*—I undertake to prove, from all their books, I mean from the standard books of both the Gallican and Ultra-montane churches (for in this they agree), that the church of Rome assumes an arbitrary power over every baptized individual; that every Protestant, from the Sovereign to the meanest subject, is declared and asserted to be the subject of the church of Rome, and to be in a state of revolt and rebellion, because they do not submit to her authority; and thus it is her right and duty, whenever opportunity permits her to do it with a hope of success, to compel them to do so by the sword or other means; and that these are the anti-social, intolerant, and persecuting principles inculcated in the standards and class books

of Maynooth, and that toleration and liberty of conscience are not to be found among her principles.

“III. *On additions and rebellion.*—I undertake to demonstrate that in the identical author which the Cardinal-archbishop commands the bishops to take for their standard for this college the year after its foundation, and in the identical works of that author, selected as the standard of instruction, not only are the doctrines on oaths and intolerance found which I have stated, but the right, the power, are asserted, and the duty is inculcated, of absolving Roman Catholic subjects from their oaths of allegiance to their Protestant Sovereign, when it shall be judged right and expedient to do so; so that, for example, as in the case of a foreign invasion of Ireland, which the Romish bishops chose to support, the doctrines which they are pledged to teach their priests, empower them, in full accordance with their principles, to absolve the whole Roman Catholic population from every oath of allegiance that could be devised to their Sovereign; and this is the doctrine not only of Thomas Aquinas, whom they are pledged to follow, but that of their other standards of the same school, Bellarmine, Devoti, Reiffenstuel, and Maldonatus, writers on theology, canon law, and scripture; that these are the principles taught by these authors and none others on the subject.

“IV. *On the training of the priests when they leave Maynooth.*—I am prepared to substantiate, on the irrefragable authority of the Directories and secret statutes of the archbishops and bishops of the church of Rome in this province (Leinster), that are now lodged, with other books and documents proving the facts, in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, that the compendium of the *Secunda Secundæ* of Thomas Aquinas, which chiefly constitutes the Theology of Peter Dens, was adopted by the Romish bishops of all Ireland, in 1808, as the best guide for all the priests; and that, in 1831, this theology was adopted by the archbishop and bishops of the province of Leinster, as the standard for the secret conferences of their priests in their respective dioceses, by which they are to train their priests to direct the consciences of the people. I am also prepared to demonstrate that the Romish archbishop of this province, Dr. Murray, had published in addition to this, a compendium of canon law, containing the abstracts of papal bulls, decretals, and canons, some of which he himself

and other bishops had denied to have even an existence, before the committees of Parliament, in 1835 and 1836; and which I can prove, by their own evidence, are put into force as ecclesiastical laws, by their publication under episcopal authority, which laws are in direct contravention of the laws of this realm, and of the liberties, rights, and safety of her Majesty's subjects, Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, as also in direct contravention of her own royal prerogatives. Now, Sir, I am prepared to take the documents and books of the College of Maynooth, and all others to which I have referred; I shall adopt any mode whatever, that you will please to prescribe, of laying them before you, or before any tribunal of authority, public or private, which you may be pleased to direct; only so that you may be put in full possession of the facts, and not legislate without the information which is perfectly at your command, on a subject so deeply involving the moral, religious, social and political existence of Ireland. I pledge myself to this statement.

“ROBT. J. M'GHEE.

“March 26th, 1845.”

To this letter I received the following answer:—

“Whitehall, March 20th, 1845.

“Sir R. Peel presents his compliments to Mr. M'Ghee, and begs leave to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. M'Ghee's communication of the 26th of March. Sir R. Peel has read the report and evidence of the Commissioners of Inquiry, referred to by Mr. M'Ghee, and does not consider it to be necessary to avail himself of the offer conveyed in Mr. M'Ghee's letter.”

The Right Hon. Baronet, no doubt, conceived that he had acquired all the necessary information that the parliamentary documents could convey to him. How far he has really acquired it, you shall learn before this meeting is closed. Now I am ready, and I stand here in part to redeem the pledge that I have given to Sir Robert Peel. It is quite impossible for me to go through the proofs of all the statements I have made to the Right Hon. Baronet; some items of those proofs have engaged me for hours upon this platform, and have wearied several meetings at Exeter Hall. I shall only select such portions, therefore, as seem to me directly relevant to the question of the College of Maynooth; and to these I shall call your attention.

You observe, I referred the Right Hon.

Baronet to the Report of the Commission of Education, in 1827. Here is that report. I refer to it with the utmost possible confidence, and I call the attention of this meeting to it, on the highest possible authority; not on my authority, but on the authority of the Right Hon. Baronet himself, and the whole British Cabinet; for hear the statements which he has made concerning this report, in the House of Commons on the second of this month.

"He (Sir R. Peel) had before stated that the servants of her Majesty had considered whether any public advantage could result from instituting an inquiry into the course of instruction pursued at Maynooth. They had read, with great attention, the report of 1827. He (Sir Robert Peel) did not consider that the report had exhausted the whole subject, but he thought it very improbable that any new light could be thrown upon it by a new inquiry."

Now I rejoice to have received this statement from the Right Hon. Baronet, because it shows, at least, that I did not call his attention impertinently to this document, when he had thought it worthy of the consideration of himself and of the whole British Cabinet.

Now, if I take this book, and begin at the foundation of the College of Maynooth—if I prove that certain books were commanded to be used by the trustees of that College, in training the youth in certain specific principles—if I show that the trustees, who consist of the four Roman Catholic archbishops and seven Roman Catholic Bishops of Ireland, pledge themselves to the Cardinal-prefect of the Propaganda to make these books, so specified the standards of the instruction of the College in these specific points—if I read to you the doctrines commanded in them on these points—and if I show you that they are returned as the standards of instruction in Maynooth—I shall prove to demonstration that the doctrines of those books on those specific points, are the doctrines necessarily inculcated in that College.

And if, to strengthen this, I leave the College of Maynooth, and follow the trustees of that College to their respective dioceses—if I show you that they adopted the same standards to guide their priests after they had left the College, in which they had instructed them in the College—if I show you that the same standards of instruction in scripture and canon law, (or rather, I should say, the same principles, though of different standards,) are adopted in

the dioceses; that are adopted in Maynooth,—then, I think, I shall redeem the pledge which I have made to the Right Honourable Baronet; and you will say that I have demonstrated the facts that I have undertaken to prove in my letter.

Now I referred Sir Robert Peel to the letter of the Cardinal-prefect of the Propaganda to the trustees of the College of Maynooth, at the time of its foundation. He says,—

"But since some certain questions yet remain, which are agitated in the disputations of the schools, on either side, preserving faith and peace, it is of great importance to declare what guides and masters should principally be used in the explanation of them; in which selection, we are saved from any protracted hesitation by the bright presentation to our eyes of those most splendid luminaries and ornaments of the church—Augustine and Thomas," (I request you will retain in your recollection the names of those prescribed authors—Augustine and Thomas,) "in whose excellent doctrine, which embraces almost the entire circle of theological discipline, any one may rely the more confidently, for this reason, that the most ample approvals, full of praise and commendation, have been given them, in the consent of all wise men; and the well known decrees of the popes. Under the influence of these men, the excessive and too relaxed facility of some persons in delivering rules of morals shall be so avoided, that the mildness and sweetness of evangelical charity may never be separated from that salutary severity which is peculiar to the Christian institution."

Sir R. Peel and the cabinet have read with attention, no doubt, this letter; but I am rather inclined to think, without the least disrespect to the learning of that august body, that they have not fathomed the meaning of it.

The answer of the trustees, (the four archbishops and seven bishops,) to this, is on this point, thus:—"In doubtful cases; about which they dispute in the schools, preserving faith and peace, since we have ascertained with how many and how extraordinary enforcements, the pontiffs and the entire church in every age have celebrated the doctrine of St. Augustine, and St. Thomas, his most faithful interpreter, we shall take care to embrace and follow them as our guides and masters in questions of this kind."

I feel the great disadvantage under which a person labour, who calls the

attention of such a meeting as this to cold, dry documents; but you will, I trust, remember that after all it is on statements such as these, that the solid conviction of the understanding—the solid determination of the man of truth and principle is to be founded in his conduct.

Now I shall examine an objection, and a very important objection, which Sir Robert Peel has made in the House of Commons on two or three occasions, to which I shall advert more particularly hereafter. He said, "He must intreat the house to beware how they drew inferences from doctrines contained in particular books." I quote from the right honourable baronet's speech, in the *Times* of the third of this month. I shall consider the application of this principle by the right honourable baronet himself hereafter. I admit fully, that because certain books are commanded or read in a certain college, or by a certain individual, you cannot justly, without other reasons, charge either the college or the individual who reads those books, with adopting all the principles contained in them. But if, as in this case, certain books are commanded to be read on certain specific points as contradistinguished from other authors who teach a different doctrine on these points—if a certain author is commanded to be taken as a "master and guide," on those specific points—and if the rulers of this college pledge themselves to take that author as their "master and their guide" in these points; then I say, that common truth and common sense must both determine, that the doctrine of those authors on those points is the doctrine adopted in that college.

Now we have here, First, the command of Rome—Secondly, we have the works specified—Thirdly, we have the authors named—Fourthly, we have the trustees pledged to these authors as their "guides and masters"—Fifthly, we have one of the authors lauded by one of the professors in this very book; because he tells us in page 144, of that St. Thomas Aquinas, "of whose *Secunda Secunda*, I have so often spoke in terms of the highest commendation, as being, in my opinion, one of the best books of ethics." We have this book lauded by the professor of ethics, as the best treatise on this subject, and returned, as one of the standards of that college, the first on the list, by the professor of logic, physics, and moral philosophy. Now the only question is, what are the points so determined to be derived from these authors?

The first is, whether the Pope has, or has not, a right to interfere, directly or indirectly, with the temporal government of princes. The next is, whether the Pope is above a general council. The next is, whether the Pope is to rule the church according to the canons. And the next is, whether the Pope is personally infallible or not. On these specific points the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas is commanded to be taught as the doctrine of Maynooth, in contradistinction to those who teach a different doctrine in the Gallican school.

Now I go directly to Thomas Aquinas. What is the doctrine taught by him on this very first point?

"We," he says, "holding the statutes of our sacred predecessors, absolve from their oath by our apostolical authority those who are bound by the sacrament of an oath of allegiance to those who are excommunicated; and we prohibit them by all means from observing fidelity to them until they make satisfaction. But apostates from the faith are also excommunicated, as also heretics, as the *Decretal* says, *De Hæreticis*, chap. *Ad Abolendam*. And, therefore, we must not obey priors, who apostatize from the faith." Again; "as it does not belong to the church to punish infidelity or unbelief in those who have never received the faith, according to that word of the apostle, in 1 Cor. v.—'What have I to do to judge those that are without?' But it can punish by its sentence the unbelief of those who have received the faith;" ("those who have received the faith" are those that are baptized; all baptized persons are meant by that;) "and these are conveniently punished by this, that they cannot rule over faithful subjects. For this would tend to a great corruption of the faith, for as we said, the apostate man meditates evil in his corrupt heart, and sows strife; and therefore, as soon as any one is denounced by a sentence as excommunicated on account of his apostasy from the faith, *ipso facto*, his subjects are absolved from his dominion, and from the oath of allegiance by which they were bound." Now this, I say, is the doctrine of that book specified in this parliamentary document, as the author on this specific point, in which the trustees of Maynooth are pledged to train the pupils of that college.

I turn now to another part, in which this author and Augustine walk hand in hand. He says—"When the Lord therefore says, 'suffer that both grow together until the harvest,' (the wheat

and the tares,) it is sufficiently apparent from what follows, how this is to be understood—lest haply, collecting the tares, ye root out the wheat along with them; where he sufficiently shows, as Augustine says against the epistle of Parmenianus, (here is Thomas quoting Augustine,) “When there is no fear, but when the crime of each is known to all, and appears execrable as it is, so that it may have no or few defenders, by which a schism may occur in the church, then let not the severity of discipline sleep.” “The severity of discipline!” “The mildness of evangelical charity” is not to be separated from the salutary “severity of discipline.”

The subject of this chapter is—“*Whether unbelievers are to be compelled to receive the faith.*” “To the third we may say, since to vow is the part of the will, but to pay what you have vowed is of necessity; so, to receive the faith is the part of the will, but to hold it when received is a part of necessity; and, therefore, heretics are to be compelled to hold the faith, as St. Augustine says in his letter to Boniface,” quoting the passage. “Where, is that,” says he, “that they are accustomed to cry out, that it is free to believe, or not to believe? to whom did Christ offer violence? Let them confess in the case of Paul, Christ first compelling him, and afterwards teaching him.”

“To the fourth we may say, as Augustine says in the same epistle—‘None of us wishes that a heretic should perish.’” Now I beg of you to consider in this, that the “evangelical charity” and the “salutary severity” are graciously blended together. “None of us wishes that a heretic should perish; but David could not otherwise have obtained peace for his house, unless his son Absalom had been put to death in the war which he had excited against his father. So the catholic church, if she affects together some, by the destruction of others, heals the grief of her maternal heart by the liberation of so many souls.” Here is “the sweetness of evangelical love,” never separated from “the salutary severity, which is peculiar to the Christian institution.”

And now, speaking of this salutary severity, I shall turn to the letter of the Cardinal-protector himself, which gives one of the most exquisite illustrations of his own principle, that is to be found in the whole range of the Papal Church. Mr. Ennes Macdonnell, of whom I will say, that there is not in the whole range of the Church of Rome, a man

who has played a deeper game of Popery than he has, with his Conservative Letters in the *Times*, and his mock attacks on Mr. O’Connell, and his mock declaration of the sanctity of a papal oath—he has written a letter to Mr. Gladstone on the Maynooth Grant, and has quoted several documents, and among the rest, the letter of the Cardinal-protector of the Propaganda to the Trustees of Maynooth. The motto of his pamphlet is—“*Beati Pacifici*”—“*Blessed are the Peace-makers.*” He has given the whole of the letter in Latin, in the appendix of his pamphlet, and he has given a translation of the first part of the letter, to show the Christian kindness, above all, the loyalty, which was to be inculcated into the students of Maynooth. This is the translation of the beginning of the letter:—

“Very illustrious and most Reverend Sir,

“So firm and constant ever has been the affection and esteem entertained by this sacred Congregation towards the Church of Ireland, standing out in the brightness of its ancient sanctity, that, as in its days of affliction, when misfortunes have assailed it, our hearts have consoled with the bitterness of its sorrow and suffering, so now, made partakers of your joy, we experience the deepest feelings of delight and mutual congratulation on the very desirable news conveyed in your letters, viz., that through the exceeding liberality and munificence of your most powerful and clement Sovereign and of your august Senate, the means have been furnished to you of establishing and erecting an adequate seminary for the training of youth to the sacred duties of the ministry. Whilst for such and so happy an event our first duty is, undoubtedly, to render immortal thanks to the Most High and beneficent God, the giver of all good gifts, it is also earnestly to be desired that you should prove the grateful and dutiful sense you entertain of so signal a benefit, by every legitimate means in your power,—a duty which we have no doubt you will be most sedulous in your endeavour to perform.

“For if it be a crime to be wanting in this duty to those even who are hostile to us, how deeply are we not indebted to those by whose kindness God grants to us the happiness of passing our lives in the calm and tranquil discharge of every exercise of piety!

“And of your ultimate and happy success in effecting, under the blessing

of God, this object, we feel the fullest confidence, grounded as it is on your long- tried and well-known virtue. Certain then are we that you will never cease to devote your attention to these two principal duties of your pastoral care; first, that you should take care that those youths who are called into the Lord's inheritance be imbued with maxims and habits worthy this holy vocation, so that, in accordance with the precept of the Apostle, they may advance in faith and love, may learn to be sober, prudent, chaste, modest, not lovers of gain, not wine-bibbers, not litigious, giving offence to no one, solicitous to preserve peace in unity of spirit; and, in the next place, they are to be often and sedulously admonished to be submissive to princes and authorities, so that these may never have cause to regret, but daily the more cause to applaud themselves for having conferred such a benefit on Catholics, the more clearly they become convinced of the inculcation of that obedience of inviolable fidelity towards the higher powers, so peculiarly a tenet of Catholic doctrine, which under the sanction of Divine authority, is of Apostolic command, and which you know to be so scrupulously and sedulously recommended by the Sacred Congregation to its *Alumni*, at all times and in every place."

Now, what wonder, that when Mr. Ruess Macdonnell translated this first part of the Cardinal-prefect's letter, and published it to all England, he should assume that every man who read that letter must be convinced that Maynooth had actually been founded to be a nursery for loyalty and obedience to the Sovereign of England! But mark the dark, the deep, the unfathomable duplicity and falsehood of this system. He writes in the front of this letter, a plain, legible command to inculcate loyalty; and he writes towards the close of this letter, a command, which the trustees fully understand, to train them in all the papal doctrines of sedition. He praises the liberality and munificence of their Sovereign for her grace in giving them a grant for that College, and he commands those bishops to train the students of that College in the principles which he and they knew were to issue in the subversion of that Sovereign's throne. These are facts—demonstrable facts; there is no question or doubt whatever upon the subject. I have read to you the book in which he has commanded that the pupils should be trained in, on the very point of obedience to sovereigns.

Now, I will take another. Let me read to you some extracts from this book of Bellarmine. This is also a standard of the College of Maynooth—returned as such. The third argument is,—

"The pastor can and ought so to feed all his sheep, as is most convenient for them;" therefore, "the Pope can and ought to command all Christians to these things, and to compel them to these things, to which they are each bound, according to their several respective stations; that is, to compel each that they should serve God in that manner in which they ought to do. But kings ought to serve God by defending the church, and by punishing heretics and schismatics, as Augustine teaches, in his letter to Boniface; therefore, he (the Pope) can and ought to command kings to do these things; and if they do not do them, to compel them by excommunication and other suitable modes." And you observe, that the moment a king is pronounced as excommunicated; that moment, *ipso facto*, as Thomas Aquinas teaches, the subjects are absolved from all allegiance. Let the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin pronounce a sentence of excommunication against the Queen of England, and that day the Roman Catholics of Ireland are absolved from the oath of allegiance, according to the doctrines taught in this College, which the prime minister of that Sovereign is now about to endow.

Again, Bellarmine continues: "Now let us come to examples. First; in the 20th chapter of the 2nd book of Chronicles, we read, that king Uzziah, when he usurped the office of the priests, was cast out by the chief priests from the temple; and when, on account of the same sin, he was smitten with a leprosy by God, he was therefore compelled to depart from the city, and to cede the kingdom to his son. That he did not do it willingly, but from the sentence of the priest, is evident, because he was deprived of the city, and of the administration of the kingdom. For the law saith in Leviticus, 'Whatsoever is infected with the leprosy, and is separated according to the will of the priest, shall dwell without the camp.' Since, therefore, this was the law of Israel, and we read, at the same time, in the book of Chronicles, that the king dwelt without the city, in a solitary place, and that his son judged the people in the city, we are compelled to say, that he was sent according to the authority of the priest, and was consequently deprived of his sovereign power. If,

themselves, or absconder of a corporeal leprosy; a priest can judge a king, and deprive him of his kingdom, why can he not do so on account of a spiritual leprosy, that is, on account of heresy, which is typified by the leprosy, as Augustine teaches in his Evangelical Questions? Observe, here, Augustine is the author which these students of Maynooth are commanded to take as their "master and guide," and which they pledge themselves to do on this specific doctrine—the doctrine of depriving kings of their sovereignty. This book is only just out of the press at Rome; it was printed in 1840; here are the covers, with the dates of the numbers as they issued from the press.

Now here is Reiffenstuel on canon law. "The conclusion stands also in a case, in which any person is bound by an obligation to him who is lapsed into heresy; so the doctors afore cited with the gloss commonly received. For the doctors commonly infer, that the Pope can, for the sake of religion, absolve the laity from an oath of fidelity, and from any other obligation, though confirmed by an oath which they held beforehand to the delinquent; both as well, because in every promise 'the cause of religion' is considered excepted; as because, in such an obligation and oath it is tacitly understood, 'if he continues such a person with whom I may lawfully communicate, or if he does not render himself justly unworthy to receive is according to law.'" It is asserted, in another passage, "that servants and vassals are, *ipso jure* (that is, from the law itself), liberated from service and fidelity to a heretic, as also annu-servants and maid-servants from obedience to the same." This is from the canon law of Reiffenstuel, published at Rome by the present Pope, the year after he came to the papacy, and returned as a standard in the college of Maynooth. Now we come to another (the last I shall trouble you with on this subject)—the Scriptures.

There are two classes of books returned in this parliamentary document. There is one list of books, which the students are all obliged to purchase at their own expense, and which they must have when they come into the college. There is another list of works recommended by the professors of the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth, for their perusal, or referred to by them in the course of their lectures. Now I shall take one of each class. This is a commentary on the Scriptures, which the Roman Catholic students of Maynooth

are obliged to purchase at their own expense: the commentary of Monochius, which was printed for the College of Maynooth. Here is a beautiful vignette of this celebrated College in the front, and the words, "The Roman Catholic College of Maynooth. Founded 1793." Now, on this favourite text of theirs, upon which you have heard the opinion of Augustine, namely, the tares and the wheat, I shall read their commentary in this class-book, which every student must have.

"Lest haply you injure the good, when you endeavour to remove the bad from the midst of them, besides that those that are bad sometimes become good;" and when they do, you know the church rejoices to receive them into her bosom. If you would only conform to the church of Rome, she would embrace you with the most tender maternal affection. "Christ does not forbid heretics to be taken away and put to death, by this: on which subject you must consult Maldonatus on this point."

Here you perceive the class-book which the student must buy, refers him for instruction here to the more perfect standard of his College. Now here is the commentary of Maldonatus, on Matt. xiii. 29:—"There are some who abuse this place, by trying to prove that heretics are not to be punished or put to death, which they who do, seem to be anxious about themselves. First, indeed, it does not refer only to heretics, but to men who are children of the devil, as opposed to the children of the kingdom; among whom heretics are the chief species, but not the only kind. Therefore, they who deny that heretics are to be put to death, ought much rather to deny that thieves, much rather than murderers, ought to be put to death; for heretics are so much the more pernicious than thieves and murderers, as it is a greater crime to steal and slay the souls of men than their bodies. Also, all the ancient authors, as Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustine, interpret this of heretics, not because they are the only tares, but because they are more especially so. Besides, though heretics only are understood, nevertheless, the Father of the family does not rashly prohibit such to be rooted out, but only lest the wheat be rooted out with them; for them, according to his opinion and will, they are not to be rooted out, when there is any danger lest the wheat be plucked out with them, as the divine Augustine and the divine Thomas, that greatest of all the-

logians, has observed: "under which 'masters and guides' the trustees of Maynooth are pledged to direct the consciences and understandings of their students. When, therefore, there is no danger that the wheat be rooted out along with them, but there is rather danger lest, if they be not plucked up, they may injure the wheat, what need is there to wait for the harvest? They are immediately to be plucked up, they are immediately to be burned."

In a time of peace, when England is at rest, it would be a most dangerous thing to attempt the eradication of the tares in Ireland; but if the sound of foreign cannon be heard across the channel, and England's hands are filled at home, and those foreign foes often invited, are received upon the shore, then, when there is no danger that the wheat be rooted out with the tares, "immediately they are to be rooted out, immediately they are to be burned." "Besides, why is there danger that the wheat will be rooted up with the tares? or why does the Father of the family order to wait for the harvest, unless that before the harvest they cannot be distinguished or separated from the wheat? When therefore they can be separated, undoubtedly they are to be separated—undoubtedly they are to be burned."

I shall now just make one or two remarks upon the parliamentary debate on the second of the present month. The hon. member for Waterford, Mr. Wyse, says, "With respect to the charge that had been frequently made, that a book entitled Dens's Theology was read at Maynooth, he begged to say that that work was not read at Maynooth, and never had been read there, and that, moreover, many of the doctrines which were sup-^{posed} to be inculcated in that college, particularly the doctrine of the power of the Pope over temporal princes, his power of deposition, and the power of breaking oaths with heretics, were not taught, but were most studiously inculcated by the statutes and every one of the professors of theology not to be taught in that college." With respect to Dens being used in the College of Maynooth, I never said it was, for the simple reason, that I never could prove it. But, indeed, I know not what is the use of Dens being read in the College of Maynooth, when Dens's master, Thomas Aquinas, is the standard appointed for the College. With respect to these doctrines being "studiously inculcated, not to be taught" in Maynooth, I really do not

know; but in all our colleges, our professors and our tutors "studiously inculcate" that the books put into our hands should be learned and taught; but Maynooth, it seems, on the testimony of Mr. Wyse, presents a most marvellous exception in the history of all literature and education, because in these the professors "studiously inculcate" that the doctrines in their books are not to be learned! What a pity that the time of these amiable professors should be so lost in endeavouring to preserve the pupils from the information of their books! Would it not be well, for the Right Hon. the Prime Minister, before he carries out his intention of endowing this College, to send to the Pope, and to request that he would favour the College of Maynooth with a set of books, which might correspond with the amiability of the professors?

But does Mr. Wyse imagine that such a statement can be imposed upon the common sense of any man out of the House of Commons? If this be the case, what was the reason why it is proved to demonstration, that as soon as the priests leave that College, from the year 1808, Dens's Theology was adopted by the whole body of British bishops assembled in Synod, as the best "guide and master" of all the priests in their dioceses?

What is the reason why those bishops, since the year 1810, have circulated secretly under their patronage, through the length and breadth of Ireland, a fuller commentary on the Scriptures, distributed by proper persons to subscribers in every town, breathing out threatenings and slaughter more full of sodiden and murder than that of Maldonatus?

What is the reason why, in the year 1831, it is demonstrated by the secret statutes of Dr. Murray, though he said to Lord Melbourne, this month ten years—^{ago} "I did not make Dens a conference book; in fact we have no such book;"—what is the reason why his own secret statutes, detected the next year, demonstrate that he not only made it a conference book, but that he made it a conference book that he might train his priests in it; that by that book, as their standard, they might direct the consciences of all the Roman Catholics committed to their charge?

What is the reason why, in 1831, those bishops dared to publish a code of canon laws, some of which they had denied on their death beds before the Commissioners of Education, and before the Commissioners of Parliament in 1823 and 1820, to have any existence in Ireland; but which they

admitted; if published, would overturn the government, and "drench our streets and fields in blood!" Why did they dare to publish this code of canon law in 1831, immediately after they had got emancipation? Why is it, that at this moment, in the midst of peace, we are suffering, in Ireland, the apprehensions of war? What is the reason why the Sovereign of this country is threatened by her subjects in Ireland, that the moment there is war, they will break out and dismember her empire?

But does this gentlemen say, that none of these doctrines are taught at Maynooth? I will read you a passage, from an author, who, speaking of the Roman Catholic Association; and the power of that Association in Ireland, says, "The Clergy too had sent in from time to time their adhesion. Maynooth began to be felt. Irishmen who had never left Ireland were the priests whom it sent forth; and though in some instances the proprieties and decencies of their ecclesiastical station considerably lost, the country gained on the whole by the infusion of a more popular spirit amongst the body."

"They had long felt that they were far more dependent upon their flocks than their flocks were on them; and though in the outset of a popular movement they were enabled to control, the decision once taken, they often had no choice but to follow."

"The recruits therefore from the second order of the clergy, were numerous beyond precedent, and in proportion as they attached themselves to the new association, they adopted its principles and executed its measures, not merely with the fidelity of a tried friend, but with the zeal and enthusiasm of a proselyte."

"Now, my lord, what were these measures which these priests executed with such fidelity, and what is the description given by this author of those measures, and their intended effect upon this empire? I will read them:—

"It was designed to tell ministers in a language which should no longer be misunderstood, that whenever the Association chose to call, that there were the people ready to follow;—that obedience to the Association was the paramount principle in the heart of every peasant in the country;—that the power of the Association was therefore absolute and universal;—that it could not be got rid of by the law, for it never infringed the law;—that it could not be got rid of by brute force, for it never rendered brute

force necessary;—that it was therefore unattackable and enduring;—that unattackable itself, it could attack others;—that without injuring established institutions, it might make use of these very institutions for every purpose of injury;—that it could wield the Constitution against the Constitution;—introduce a sullen perpetual war into the bosom of peace;—disturb every relation of society without violating a single enactment, on which such relations repose;—and finally, produce such an order of things as to compel the minister to choose between coercion and conciliation—between justice and tyranny—between war and peace—between equalization and revolution."

"It was intended to tell him that the crisis had come, and there was no longer any time left him for pause or deliberation."

Here is the history of the mechanism of the Popish Association in the year 1829; the history of the same mechanism now carried on by the Repeal movement in 1845. And the man who writes this history is the man who dares to stand up in the House of Commons, to prate of peace and charity, and tell the country that these doctrines are not taught in Maynooth! This is Mr. Wyse's History of the Roman Catholic Association. Vol. i. 203—302.

I am very sorry to see that the Prime Minister seconded the efforts of Mr. Wyse in the debate to which I am referring.

Sir Robert Peel said, "He must intreat the house to beware how they drew inferences from doctrines contained in particular books. He would remind the hon. member for Kent, that in the course of the evidence given before the committee on Maynooth education, the following question was put to one of the professors at Maynooth:—'Are you aware that Dr. Paley in his *Moral Philosophy*, in treating on promises, undertakes to show that promises are not binding where the performance is impossible; that promises are not binding where the performance of them is unlawful; that promises are not binding where they contradict a former promise; that promises are not binding which are released by the promisee; and that erroneous promises are not binding in certain cases?' Now, if these sentences had been read without the name of Dr. Paley being mentioned, would they not have been apt to produce a wrong impression? But what was the answer to this question? 'I have not read that work, but all those principles are the same as ours

exactly;—these being the principles of Dr. Paley." From which Sir Robert Peel wishes the country to conclude, that the principles on oaths in the College of Maynooth are the same as the principles in Paley's *Moral Philosophy*.

With respect to principles contained in books, I confess, I know not how the house of Commons, or any human being can form a judgment of the doctrines taught in the College, unless from the books of that College, except indeed it be that the Right Hon. Baronet adopts the principle of Mr. Wyse, that the superiors "studiously inculcate that the doctrines of the books are not to be learned." But what are we to do? are we to take the doctrines of the professors? The Right Hon. Baronet has supplied us with this test, too; so let us try Maynooth on evidence as cited by Sir Robert Peel.

He refers us to the evidence of two professors; we shall go to the first. I refer to the passage cited by the Right Hon. Baronet, page 180, of the evidence in this report, from which he quotes the the professor's answer to Paley.

I am perfectly sure, that the Right Hon. Baronet did not arm himself with this quotation from the parliamentary evidence, as an apology for Maynooth, to mislead the house or the public mind upon the subject; I am sure there is no one that hears me, who would not indignantly acquit him of such a charge if it were made against him. But I deeply regret, that both for his own sake and that of truth, he did not a little more closely study the evidence from which he made this extract; so as to furnish his own mind with sound information on such a momentous subject. For if he had read the evidence of this same man in the very page preceding his own quotation, he would have seen the vital difference between the doctrines of Popery, and those of any sound Christian moralist, on the subject of oaths. This very professor, in these asked, whether he had read a treatise of Bishop Sanderson on the *Obligation of Oaths*, (these treatises were, in my opinion brought in, so throw a qualified confusion over the whole matter, and confound the doctrines of Paley and Sanderson with theirs), and he answers,—"I have seen it to-day, and I read some of it; I find it differs almost in nothing from ours in its divisions and subdivisions, only just that it does not admit the dispensing power of the pope in respect of Catholics!" Mark! "Only just!" That is, "only just that it does

not admit the dispensing power of the Pope!"—Why, herein lies the whole vital difference between popery and protestantism on the question. The protestant believes that he is responsible to God, and only to God, for the obligation of his oath; while popery teaches, that the pope or a bishop can assume God's prerogative over the conscience, and nullify any promise or oath which a man can make, whenever he pleases. And this is the professor, whose evidence is quoted, no doubt by mistake, by Sir Robert Peel, to prove that the principles on oaths in Maynooth are the same as those held by our professors of moral theology!

But now we shall refer to the authorities of Maynooth; to examine this subject a little more closely.

I open Reiffenstuel, the standard of Maynooth, printed, as I have said, under the authority of the present Pope. I find here, in a chapter on the obligation of promissory oaths,—

"Question. What conditions may be considered to be tacitly implied in a promissory oath?

"We answer, First, in every promissory oath, *however absolutely made*, certain tacit conditions are understood. . . . Among conditions of this sort which are tacitly, and justly indeed, in a promissory oath, the first is, 'if I should be able,' because no one is bound to an impossibility; and this proceeds from any impossibility, whether it be impossible *de jure*, (namely, that could not be done honestly and on sound principles,) or whether it be impossible *de facto*, (namely, that could not be done physically, or at least without the greatest difficulty.) . . . To this may be referred this condition, *If I shall please God, if I can do it lawfully*; because an oath is not the bond of iniquity; for those things which are unlawful or displease the Lord God, are justly considered impossible.

"The second condition is, *saving the right and authority of my superior*."

These authorities are quoted on this subject; Reiffenstuel, Jus. C. lib. II. Decret. fol. 24.

Now what does the Church of Rome call impossible? what does she mean by unlawful? who is this superior, whose right over the conscience is to be reserved as a tacit condition in the mind of him who takes the oath?

We turn to the next chapter, on the obligation of a promissory oath, and there we find, in the eighty-second section, the sixteenth canon of the third Lateran Council, quoted, "those are not

to be called oaths but rather perjuries, which are taken contrary to Ecclesiastical utility."

Again, we find, in the eighty-fourth section, that an oath of keeping "the statutes, ordinances, or customs of places, when in them are contained any things unlawful, impossible, injurious, or obstructive of ecclesiastical liberty, is unlawful, and by no means to be taken."

For this is cited by the authority of the Canon Law, in the Decretals of Sextus, and we find the reference as follows:—

"It happens to be observed in some churches, that neither their prelates, when they first come to those churches, are admitted, nor canonical persons when new canonical persons are to be received in them, unless they swear inviolably to observe the statutes and customs of those churches, written and unwritten. Among laymen also, in many states, camps, and countries, in assuming their stations of power, rule, and office, a discourse of custom hath crept in, that these powers, rulers, and officials, are by no means admitted to their places of power, rule, and office, unless they shall have first sworn that they will keep the statutes included in those places. But because in those statutes and customs aforesaid sometimes some things are found unlawful, or impossible, or obstructing the liberty of the church, lest under such a general mode of swearing, an occasion of sinning might be afforded to those who thus swear, since an oath was not instituted to be the bond of iniquity, wishing by this general constitution to oppose shouglers of souls, we command that oaths of this sort shall not be taken by any persons, knowing that there are contained in the aforesaid customs and statutes any things unlawful, impossible, or obstructive of the liberty of the church, and such oaths to be made, or having been made with that intention, that any things unlawful, impossible, or obstructing the liberty of the church, should be observed, since even they cannot be taken with such an intention without an offence against the Divine majesty. We decree, that in things of this sort, unlawful, impossible, or obstructive of the liberty of the church, they are not to be kept."

Here is one of the standards of Maynooth canon law, and here the canon law to which it refers on the subject.

What now, then, appears from the testimony which Sir Robert Peel cites from this professor's evidence, by which he endeavours to identify the doctrines of the Papacy on oaths with the moral philoso-

phy of Paley? Paley says, "that a promise is not binding when the performance is impossible;" this is true. He says, "It is not binding when the promise is unlawful;" this is also true. He says, "it is not binding where it contradicts a previous promise;" this, in a just sense, is also true.

But what new is the demonstrative principle of the Papacy as unanswerably proved by her canon law? That the performance of every oath is to be considered impossible, the obligation of every oath to be considered unlawful, when it obstructs or is injurious to the interests of the Church of Rome. The very evidence quoted by the Right Hon. Baronet, the meaning put on the very words of Paley he has quoted, by the standard of Maynooth, and the decretal of Sextus, demonstrates, that the ordinary meaning of the plainest terms applied to the obligation of promissory oaths, is so perverted by the laws of popery, as to mean, that the most solemn oaths can have no obligation when they are contrary to the interests or obstructive of the liberty, that is, of the domination of the Church of Rome. And as to the obligation of a previous promise, it is demonstrated that no Roman Catholic can take a promissory oath without tacitly reserving, if he is true to his church, the previous right and power of his superior to dispense with any oath which it is possible for him to take.

These principles on oaths have nothing to do with Gallican or Ultra-Montane principles; they are, as stated in my letter to Sir Robert Peel, the doctrines of all their books; there is no author in the range of all Papal theology, who can dare to deny that bishops have a right to dispense with the obligations of promissory oaths. So much for the evidence of this first professor, as quoted to disprove the doctrines of Maynooth.

But the Right Hon. Baronet goes on:—"As another proof of the danger of trusting to such indications, he might state, that, during the same inquiry, the following question was put to another professor at Maynooth:—"In the third canon of Laceran is it not understood that amongst the punishments decreed against the Albigenses, this was determined,—*Illorum subditi et vassalli relaxatos se novorint a debito fidelitatis domini et totius obsequii donec in tanta iniquitate permanerent*? This appeared to imply, that, in certain cases, a spiritual authority might release the subjects of a sovereign from their allegiance; but what was the reply of the professor of

dogmatic theology? He said,—“If it be supposed that a Council or Pope, or any authority whatever, assumed the right of absolving subjects from their allegiance to their sovereign, I would disregard their decision, and consider the subject by no means freed from the obligations of fidelity. Not only would I despise and disregard such a decree, but, if a subject of the sovereign in question, I would consider it my religious duty to openly resist it, and advise such of the people as might be committed to my care, to remain unshaken in their allegiance.” Now let them place that practical statement against the doctrine of the Council of Lateran; and because certain doctrines were contained in some books used at the College of Maynooth, let them not suppose that the instruction given at that institution was inconsistent with their duty to God, to their neighbour, and to their sovereign.”

My first reply to this statement shall be thus. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.” Those whom God marks as apostates from the faith, “forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats,” are branded also with this mark upon their brow—“speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.” But I answer, secondly, without any reference whatsoever to the man who gave that answer on his oath, give me that answer from any man who is “a professor at Maynooth,” and I say he is a public perjurer. He is bound by an oath to his church to receive indubitably that Council; if he is true in his oath to his Church, he is perjured in that oath to the commissioners; if he is true in his oath to the commissioners, he is perjured in his oath to his Church.

But who is the man, whose authority the Prime Minister of England cites from the treasury bench in the House of Commons, as a model of the sanctity of an oath, and of the loyalty of a subject, and of the value of the College of Maynooth? Who is this man, whose authority he cites, for denying the doctrine of the 3rd Lateran Council, that subjects could be absolved from their oath of fidelity to their Sovereign? He is a man, whose

whole existence gives a long, loud, living lie to every word of this statement. The meeting will hardly believe—the nation will hardly believe—that the man whose authority is thus cited by Sir Robert Peel, in support of this bill in the House of Commons, is the Popish Bishop of Ardagh—Dr. Higgins! I have the respect in my hand; I turn to the passage quoted; and here is the name—Dr. WILLIAM HIGGINS! This is the man, who in 1830 signed, with the other bishops, a pastoral to all the people of Ireland, declaring that having obtained the object of their desire in Catholic emancipation, they withdrew from all further political agitation, and hoped it never would be renewed.—This is the man, who with the other bishops, signed a declaration published in the Directory of 1836, and in all the papers in Ireland, expressly forbidding that the clergy should in future use their chapels for any political meeting, or any political agitation. And this is the man, who placed himself at the head of the repeal movement in Ireland, who at once organized the whole body of his clergy, seventy-four in number, and sent in their adhesion to it—the man, who at the time of the monster meetings, when the government threatened to put them down, threatened the government, that if they dared to put down the meetings in the fields, the chapels throughout the country should be used as the rallying places for the people.—And this is the man, whose subscription, and that of all his priests, to the repeal fund, amounting to £74, is announced in the *Freeman's Journal* of the 3rd. of May—the very same date with the *Times* newspaper, containing the prime minister's citation of his authority in the House to justify his bill. But this subscription is accompanied with a letter to Mr. O'Connell, in which he says, “Much has been said about the gratitude we owe for the grant to Maynooth, but I confess that I for one, (and I am joined in that sentiment by the priests and people of this diocese,) feel no gratitude whatever: in the first place, our own enmities and determination wrong that paltry sum from a bigoted and anti-Irish cabinet, nor shall we ever thank the rich pluton when he disdainfully flings us the crumbs from his table; secondly, the grant is so miserable in amount, that it can be looked upon in no other light, than as a sheer mockery and insult.”

The Right Hon. Baronet has been pleased to inform us, that “he has read with great attention this report of 1827.”

I am perfectly satisfied, that he never opened the book to take that passage to quote in the House of Commons, because the name "William Higgins" stands in the margin, and it is wholly impossible that Sir Robert Peel could have taken such an authority. Some sycophantic flatterer, some papal traitor, some Jesuitical knave, has abused his confidence; has furnished him with this information to arm him for the objection against the grant, but to mock him for making it; and he has unsuspectingly taken it, and committed himself by quoting it in the House of Commons. But what now, let me ask, will the Right Hon. Baronet do under the high sanction which he has adopted?

Will the Right Hon. Baronet convene his Cabinet Council and discuss with them the propriety of proposing the third reading of this bill on Monday, and introducing it into the house under the sanction of Dr. Higgins?

Will the Right Hon. Bart. propose the third reading of his bill on Monday, as supported by the authority of Dr. Higgins? How will he meet the smooth, bland smile of Mr. Wyse, how the sardonic grin of Mr. Shiel, when he moves it under the sanction of their venerable bishop, Dr. Higgins—an admirable scholar, and an admirable illustration of the system taught in Maynooth?

Will the Rt. Hon. Bart. say to his majority—"Gentlemen, I hope I shall be supported by all your voices in the third reading, reinforced as we are by the excellent and right reverend Dr. Higgins?" How will that majority ever face their constituents again? To what city, to what town, to what village, to what honest Englishman can one of them apply, and say—"My good friend, I hope I shall have the honour of your support at the next election?" "Why, John Bull will answer, 'no,' if you shan't; you have given my vote to Maynooth and Dr. Higgins." Will not the whole body of the majority be known by the name of "Dr. Higgins and Company?" They are mistakenly lamentably misinformed, most awfully ignorant of the system that is taught; but they are gentlemen, many of them with a high feeling of honour. And if the prime minister can indeed get them to commit themselves, and commit their character, in thus supporting the third reading, will he venture to send the bill up to the House of Lords under the protection of Dr. Higgins?

Which of the Lords will he venture to ask to move it? I am afraid, my

Lord, he would have a very bad chance with your Lordship.

Will he ask Lord Stanley to move it? What! and is this all the reward of Lord Stanley for crushing the church of Ireland? for telling us that it was a vital defect that the bible should be in the national education of that unhappy country? for setting up that iniquitous board of education, which teaches idolatry and falsehood, and shuts up the Bible from my poor countrymen?—(for oh! let no man think, let no man say, that I speak against the poor Roman Catholics of Ireland; the system of these ecclesiastics, and the condition of the poor people, are as different as the position of the slave driver and of the slave whom he lashes; I love my dear Roman Catholic countrymen, and would lay down my life for them, to bring to them the knowledge of the glorious gospel of Christ, and to turn them from those priests of guilt, and sin, and death, to that glorious high priest, "who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God;" and it is because I mourn for their condition, and it is because I abhor the system that enslaves them, that I stand here to plead against this measure. I protest before God, if I were asked whom I think I serve more, the Protestants or the Roman Catholics of Ireland, by exposing the iniquity of these priests, and opposing the endowment of Maynooth, I say beyond all question I serve more my poor Roman Catholic countrymen. One of the iniquities of this measure is, that instead of introducing true liberty, and peace, and light, and truth into Ireland, the British government is carrying in darkness, and misery, and slavery, and war.) But is this all the reward my Lord Stanley has for the sacrifice of his church and of his bible, and the sacrifice of his conscience, (for I trust he is not so awfully ignorant as to feel the bible a vital defect in the education of an immortal being,) that for these great services to Popery, he is permitted to move in the House of Lords a bill for the endowment of Maynooth, under the venerable sanction of Dr. Higgins?

Or will the prime minister venture to call on the Duke of Wellington to introduce this iniquitous bill? Will he call on the flower of England's and of Europe's chivalry, the bulwark of his country's honour, to prostrate the honour of that country at the feet of Dr. Higgins?

Will he call upon the Lord Chancellor, to prostrate the laws and liberties of England at the feet of Dr. Higgins?

Will he call upon the prelates of England—men who are bound by their solemn ordination vows, and bound still more by the solemn vows of consecration, under which they hold their high and holy office, to “use all faithful diligence to banish and drive away” these iniquitous and abominable doctrines?—Will he call on them to violate their vows and oaths, by identifying their principles with, or surrendering them to, this dignified prelate of the papacy, Dr. Higgins?

Will he venture to go up to the footstool of the throne of that Sovereign, who has entrusted him with the administration of her government, and to ask her royal assent to a bill for the endowment of a College, whose teaching he assures his royal mistress is not seditious against her throne, on the interpretation of the third Lateran Council given on oath by Dr. Higgins?

If the Prime Minister would dare to do so, oh! for the mighty, the indignant thunderbolt of a Chatham's voice in the Commons, to rend in pieces the hollow-

hearted, cowardly, spiritless legislation of these base, degenerate days! Oh! for the electric fire of his eloquence to thrill round the House of Lords, to evoke the genius of the Constitution to come to the rescue of his country, “to call the ancestors of the nobles of England to frown from the tapestried walls, on such an insult upon the honour and dignity of this illustrious branch of the legislature; to invoke the judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, and the bishops the sanctity of their lawn, against such a monstrous violation and desecration of the laws, the liberties, and the religion of their country!”

But vain is the help of man. O Lord! “raise up thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us.” O God! raise up men of truth, of principle, of virtue, of religion, of honour; men who are not ashamed, or afraid, to profess themselves the servants of their God, and then, and not till then, they will not be afraid to be the faithful servants of their Sovereign and their country!”

MAYNOOTH.

SPEECH

OF THE

REV. MORTIMER O'SULLIVAN, D.D.

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION, HELD IN THE LARGE ROOM, EXETER HALL, ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1845, THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WINCHELSEA IN THE CHAIR.

THE resolution which I have the honour to move, affirms in the first place, that we regard the Coronation Oath as a great national defence; and in the second place, promises that we shall use all constitutional means of resistance to any measure, that seems to violate the letter or the spirit of that sacred engagement. Economy of time is, on the present occasion, of no ordinary moment; and I am given to know, that I am to be followed by one who has a hereditary claim, not to be interfered with in supporting this resolution. I shall therefore confine myself to the humbler duty of following my reverend brother from Ireland, in endeavouring to show, that that measure which has occupied so much, and so deservedly, the attention of this meeting, is one,

which ought to be deprecated and resisted.

My lord, I may with much confidence affirm, that no honest supporter of that Bill has looked more anxiously and more earnestly for some good in it, than the individual who has now the honour to address you. Considering the persons by whom the Bill was patronised, considering that union of conflicting interests who seem to have made an alliance with a view to carrying it, considering the consequences, possible, and probable perhaps, of the rejection of it, I looked with a very earnest desire to discover good, if good were discoverable in it; and with a wish that the Bill should have the acquiescence of necessity, if only in its character, or its natural consequences, there could be

some justification sufficient for the acquiescence. My lord, my search has been unsuccessful. It has ended in the persuasion in which it commenced, and has led me to the painful conviction, that the measure is among the worst, if not the very worst, of all measures that ever found favour in a British Senate; and that the argument by which it is maintained is in keeping with it; both alike unworthy the adoption of any man who values principle, or has right notions of expediency.

My lord, the Bill for the permanent endowment of Maynooth, is a bill for the permanence of religious division in Ireland; a bill to confirm division; to widen and to embitter it. It is a Bill, having in it the germ of much evil; having in its consequences, tumult, dissension, massacre, the dismemberment of the empire, and sanguinary conflict. If such consequences as these showed themselves in the train of a measure which was conceived in the fear of God, and carried out in conformity with His commandments, we should look upon them patiently, because we were not criminally responsible for them. But it is a very fearful thing to have such consequences provoked, by the carrying out of a measure, which no duty, Divine or human, enjoined upon us; from which, on the contrary, the nation should hold itself dissuaded by the most solemn obligations that can influence individuals and States.

A bill, my lord, of this description, necessarily must have some excuses offered for it; and excuses have been offered—of two kinds: one looking back to the remote past, and the other looking forward to a promised future. It has been said, that the men of the present day, are bound by some inferential, though not real compact, entered into on the part of their predecessors. It appears, that the Irish Parliament, under circumstances of a very peculiar character, enabled the Roman Catholics of Ireland to provide a college and support it, for the education of their own ecclesiastics, and that the parliament also made a grant of the public money, towards furnishing forth this undertaking. But it was an experiment, that the Roman Catholics were to support it. It appears now, that the Roman Catholics were disinclined to support it. I enter not into the reasons. They may have been most creditable to them, most full of hope to us. It is sufficient to say,

that they were not inclined to support it; and because they leave it to its poverty, modern statesmen come and say, that we are bound to endow it with affluence, inasmuch as those who should have supported it, have left it to decay. But it is absurd to speak of a compact; even if there were such a compact can only bind, while there is a restraint within the limits it assigns. It can justify, only so far as it binds; and the moment one passes the line, that it has set, responsibility commences. But there is no compact; and the reference to it merely shows the weakness of a cause which can rest upon it.

Another argument, my lord, is one of promise. We are told, that if we give the countenance of England, and the coin of England, to support this institution, good will come from it. My lord, this is legislation on the promissory principle. I confess, I do not like it. To me, it would appear that we have had somewhat too much of it. It has been almost the only class of legislation which we have had, upon matters of the Church of Rome. Time after time, privileges have been given by the State; promises have been given on the part of those, or by those who have benefited by them. I like it not. It is easy to part with privileges, when one gets no better security; like Mr. Lever's Galway gentleman, who found it an easy matter to dispose of his estate, when he got in payment promissory bills, renewable for ever. Our legislature find it very easy to give up the securities and the fortresses of the constitution, getting only promises in exchange; and these promises have all been very gracious, until the time came when they were to be redeemed; and then we are put off with a new advance on the part of the State, and new promises equally well kept, on the part of those who made them. In the present instance, let us do the Roman Catholics of Ireland the justice to say, that they gave no promises. Sir Robert Peel has made the promise on their part; they themselves have given him no authority to make it.

But, my lord, this is a case, in which we can at once know, that the promise is not to be kept. It is untrue; and in this argument in favour of the Bill it is difficult—difficult indeed, to find anything which we are to praise, except the impartiality of its injustice. It is unjust to the dead, unjust to the unborn; throwing the blame of the measure, by calumny, on the

men who have passed away, and flinging its tremendous consequences upon the men who are yet to be born. I say, 'my lord, that these promises are not promises to be believed. We have a reason why they are not to be believed; because we have the argument which was given in their favour.' I shall not read that argument; it would occupy much time, and I shall only refer to matter so notorious, that it will not need direct reference.

You are aware, my lord, of the reason assigned for hoping good from this measure. Sir Robert Peel has told us, that as long as the State connected itself with the College of Maynooth, and that College was maintained in the condition in which it appears to have been found, instead of experiencing gratitude from those who were educated there, we sent them forth with feelings of indignation in their hearts—and, as we are half given to understand—purposes of vengeance. The case of the argument is thus: the State afforded all facilities for the endowment of Maynooth by the Roman Catholics, and furnished the assistance of a grant, which has been annually maintained; the Roman Catholics leave the Institution of Maynooth in a state, which the Minister declares was not fit to educate persons for the priesthood; and those who are educated there, instead of thanking the Government for the performance of its part, instead of refusing its bounty, if they did not think it sufficient, are content to accept that bounty, to eat of your meat, and repose in your chambers, to be instructed by your paid professors, and then to go forth with scorn in their hearts, not against their own people, who deserted them, but against England who did her duty, "not wisely, but too well."

I really, my lord, am indisposed to think that the Minister has drawn this picture from the life; at least, from the life of the Roman Catholic priests in Ireland. I do not think he does them justice. There is one species of life which appears a kind of prototype of it; the life that poetry creates and inspires in its performances. Sir Walter Scott has given us an idea of it in the case of his "Athelstan, the Unready," who was perfectly indifferent to all the wrongs and sufferings he had experienced from those, by whom he was smitten down, and trodden under foot; but who was ready to dare a thousand deaths, and defy to mortal combat, those men who had put too much garlic in his

gruel. There is a species of prototype of such a character, as Sir Robert Peel has drawn. I do not think it is to be found in the Roman Catholic priests of Ireland.

But, my lord, if it be true; if they are persons, who have been gentle, and kind, and affectionate to those that have done them wrong, and have been injurious and spiteful to those who have endeavoured to do them service; then, I say, that we have better authority than that of any prime minister, for refusing to accept the prime minister's promises. A book, which he ought to have learned in Oxford, and with which, perhaps, he is acquainted still, tells us, that "he, which is unrighteous in that which is little, is unrighteous also in much;" and we will, therefore, believe, upon the authority of that Book, that if, by the constant endeavours of the State to support Maynooth, and the constant neglect of the Roman Catholics to co-operate with them, we have made the Roman Catholic priests enemies of the State, there is no reason to expect, that such men can be conciliated by placing at their disposal larger powers for evil.

There has been, my lord, one tiny flourish of argument, not patronised by many of the great men who have stood forward in defence of Maynooth; but which, I am told, has been working some insidious evil in society; and which I would, with your permission, notice. It is the argument, that the gift to Maynooth is restitution. I do not mean to take you into the tangled paths of history upon this subject, but I think, it may not be inexpedient to state a general principle, by which this argument, and others of the same kind, are responded to. The argument runs thus:—There was property in Ireland over which the Church had dominion in old times; that property was taken from the Church of Rome and appropriated to the Church of England, and therefore that property now reverts again in the form of restitution to the Church which originally lost it.

My lord, the Church of Rome, the modern Church of Rome, never had property in Ireland. You are not at a loss to understand the distinction, which is to be taken, between the faith of a Church, and the opinions which its members entertain, and its discipline, worship, and ceremonies; and you are ready to admit, and all who understand the subject know I speak the truth when I say, that even

the modern Church of Rome admits, that there is only one of all these particulars that is to be held unchangeable: Opinions will vary as society and knowledge vary; discipline will alter as it shall seem expedient for times and circumstances; but faith must ever be the same. Faith has been given from above; God has bestowed it; He has declared the faith which is to save; and that faith is to be kept unadulterated, unmodified, undefiled, while all else in the Church may change, provided she change be in conformity with Scripture and right reason: Now the difference between the modern Roman Catholic and the modern Church in this country, (we call it the modern Church, but it is a part of the ancient Church;)—the difference between the Churches of England and of Rome at this day is just this,—the Church of England has exercised its rightful power to correct and improve evil ceremonies and false opinions, and has kept steady to the faith; the Church of Rome has taken upon her to corrupt and augment the faith, while she has retained superstitious ceremonies and opinions.

My friend, Mr. M'Ghee, suggests to me: to show you more accurate proof of this. I merely meant to state the principle, that the Church of England has simply made the alterations she was at liberty to do, and bound to do, by all the laws of the Church; and the Church of Rome has made alterations which she was not at liberty to do, and by doing which she dis-entitled herself to the name of a branch of the Catholic Church. One statement will show you how this matter regards property and restitution. A Roman Catholic priest in the present day, if he entered into the possession of a benefice, must, as an indispensable prerequisite, swear to the Creed of Pius IV. He could not possess the property, by the laws of his Church, until he had sworn to that Creed. But the whole frame-work of our Church, with all its changes, were made ten years before that Creed had existence! The men, therefore, of olden time, took their property or their endowments, without being bound by that creed; they could not re-enter into them now, without swearing to that creed. The creed is that which determines the Church; and it is, therefore, a new Church, inasmuch as it is a new creed.

My lord, the Bill for the endowment of Maynooth, has in its immediate opera-

tion, the tendency to confirm, widen, and embitter division; and in its more distant, although not remote effects, to establish the ascendancy of the Church of Rome; and finally, to produce a convulsion, in which there will either be a dismemberment of the empire, or a most sanguinary civil war. I do not mean to speak of the influences which may, under God's blessing, cross, and thwart, and obstruct this process; we are only concerned with the Bill and its tendencies. In the first place, its tendency is to divide. My lord, when a State confers a distinction, and marks a preference for any body in her community, she necessarily marks out division and separation. Our State now endows a College for the education of Roman Catholic ecclesiastics alone. Is this the spirit of the policy of these later days? What said the State upon another occasion? 'We must have united education; we will not tolerate or endow, so far as we have power, any system but that which shall bring parties of various religious denominations together.' And because honour to God's Word stood in the way of such an aggregation of parties, that honour must give way, and the Scriptures must be disparaged, in order to promote the more desirable end of united education. Now, my lord, if there be any one department in which united education is especially desirable, assuredly it is in the education of ecclesiastics. If the object be to make of us Irishmen one people; to put down from our minds all thought of what is called sectarian distinction; if that be the great object, how can it be more effectually carried out, than by giving us to see the clergy of the national Church of England, the national Church of Scotland, and the Church of Rome, (I am supposing that I am speaking as one of the favourers of this measure)—all these educated in harmony together! How, then, are we to understand this policy, which at one end shows such a love of united education, that it will discountenance the Bible in order to effect it; and at another, shows such a love for divided education, that it will endow Maynooth, rather than discontinue it?

The measures, as I have stated them to you now, my lord, appear contrasted one with another. It may be, that they are not contrasted; it may be, that they are but parts of the same policy; and that although there are two bodies, with two

conflicting and diverse fronts, they have one hollow heart, as that from which they both receive the issues of life. I see one principle in which they may unite; and that principle is, love for the ascendancy of Rome. The Romish principle is affirmed, first, in the united education. What would you say, is the distinguishing principle of Romanism—its characteristic iniquity? I would say, after some consideration of the subject, it is its law respecting Holy Scripture. There is, perhaps, no other error of Romanism, in which, looking at the eastern and western Churches, we might not find some body that would participate; but in her peculiar doctrine respecting Scripture, she stands alone. Her doctrine is this, my lord: in the first place, she affirms that the Scripture is the Word of God; she admits that; she admits that it contains truth, that it contains all truth; and yet the Scripture is the only book which she requires her ministers, in their solemn act of faith, to promise that they will hold disparaged. For what is the undertaking? It is this. Never to take or interpret Scripture, except in the sense in which the Church receives it, and unless according to the unanimous consent of the fathers. Therefore, a man is bound to abstain from the study of Scripture, until he has found the fathers of one mind upon the subject.

My lord, I said this is the principle affirmed in our national system of education. Our system of education has gone through various changes; its rules have shifted into various forms; but they have preserved one principle throughout, and that is the Romanist principle. First, the form was, that inasmuch as the compositions of men, catechisms, and creeds, and so forth, were refused admittance into the schools, the Scripture must be refused admittance also. Now, the principle is, that wherever the Scripture is admitted into the schools, those compositions of men must be admitted with it. So that the catechism of the Roman Catholic priest, if excluded, excludes the Bible; and if the Bible be admitted, the catechism must be admitted with it. I will therefore say, that there is the principle of Romanism adopted with respect to national education. The same principle is adopted with respect to Maynooth. And thus, although the two parts of this system may seem to contradict each other, we yet find a principle in which they

aptly harmonise. I say, then, my lord, that the State, in endowing this institution of Maynooth, is creating, confirming and embittering division.

They cannot here plead precedent, for there was no precedent in the old grant to Maynooth. When that grant was made, it was not an exclusive grant. At that time, Protestant seminaries were endowed. The Charter Schools were supported by grants from the State; the Association for discountenancing vice, was supported by grants from the State. But it is the distinction of modern policy, that while it withdraws all grants from Protestant institutions, it confers this badge of honour upon Romish.

And now, my lord, I pass to the next part of the subject: that it tends to widen and embitter division. And need I do more than remind your lordship and this meeting, of what has already been stated, respecting the doctrines taught at Maynooth? Are these the doctrines, or is this the system of instruction, to which the State should extend the protection of secesy? Are these the doctrines, from which it can hope that peace and good-will can spread? My lord, men say, sometimes, that the character of modern times will make itself felt, even upon these pestilential doctrines at Maynooth; and that although they are in themselves evil, uncharitable, intolerant, yet when they catch the spirit of the age, they become mitigated. What has my reverend brother told you? He has told you that the spirit of the dark ages has been evoked, in order to counteract the efforts of the genius of modern times. Was Thomas Aquinas a man of modern times? He is the man, who is appointed to be the arbitrator, the guide, the director of studies in all difficult matters; is he a man impregnated with the spirit of modern times? No, my lord, but he was a man of mighty genius, of penetrating sagacity; a man endowed with all the qualities that could recommend a good judgment, or an evil. And this is the man, that they have gone 600 years back, to dig up and to disinter from the darkness of the past and middle ages, in order to drag into the present time the pestilent spirit of the past. It is not, then, in such a system as this, that you can expect peace and good-will.

One thing is certain. The doctrines which my reverend brother has described as taught in Maynooth, are doctrines altogether unintelligible, except as forming

part and parcel of an ascendant despotism. The system must be despotic, in order to render the doctrines intelligible. What, then, must the natural effect of such doctrines be, when the system is not ascendant? It must be, that they will be a fire in the heart, and a prompter in the soul of every man who receives them, to labour until he has set his Church on that pinnacle, on which its doctrines can be carried into effect. Such is the natural course of things; such is the natural interpretation.

I am reminded that I must not longer detain you; but I would not wish to pass by one part of my enumeration. I have come now so far, in endeavouring to take short cuts to the point that I promised to look to at first—this of the Roman Catholic ascendancy. Does this involve any evil consequences, further than merely the destruction of the Protestant Church in Ireland, and the murder or starvation of a couple of thousand ecclesiastics?

I know, that some seem to think that it involves little more, and that England would be released from very considerable embarrassment, if this compendious conclusion were brought to pass. But there would be worse evil still. Yet, may I say, one word in behalf of our maligned Church in Ireland? I thought to have said more; but I will remind you of one principle. Reflect for one moment, and you will see, that the reason that our Church is hated and resisted in Ireland, is because it has, as it is thought, the taint of Anglicanism upon it; and it is rather too bad, that we should be hated in Ireland, because we are thought English, and scorned, and contemned, and maligned in England, because we are accounted Irish.

We have been told, that we have not done our duty, because we have not converted the Roman Catholics. How little the men who speak thus, understand the state of Ireland! In Ireland there are two principles in combined operation, which are now counteracting each other, and checking each other, in every other part of the world. There is what is called the national feeling, and there is the religious feeling, both united in one, the two passions are fused together; the one being hatred of England, and the other being love to Rome, as connected with the instrumentality of that hatred. In other countries, the two principles counteract each other. You have in the German and in the Italian, the national

feeling, to some extent, counter-checking the sectarian feeling; in Ireland, they unite; and there is a difficulty here, that do not think of.

But we will suppose the Church of Rome in the ascendant. You are already giving to the Romish Bishops, patronage to the amount of 500 appointments, in which men will be changed from the condition of peasants to that of gentlemen. You are giving the Roman Catholic Bishops this patronage; you will increase their patronage much, in proportion as you advance. Once bestow this upon them, and can men look calmly upon such a state of things, and not fear that there may be some worse evils, than even the cutting down of a number of Irish parsons?

One right honourable gentleman (Mr. Macaulay) has said, that he will cling to, that he will maintain the legislative union with Ireland; and that if the sea were covered with hostile fleets, and armies bristling to invade the land, he would, even in the extremity of such difficulties, maintain the Union. He was a simple as well as a sanguinary orator. His enemies, in that case, would not be on flood or field; they would not be in armed ships, or armed ranks; they would be sitting upon the benches of the House of Commons, by his side. They would be cheering his well-rounded periods; they would be assisting him to distract or to mislead legislation. Only let the repeal party in Ireland become enabled, as this act goes far to enable them, to send into the House of Commons ninety members, attached to their cause, and well governed and directed; and where is the British minister, that after that can conduct the affairs of the empire? Let them be well-trained and well-tempered; let them avoid bringing forward prominently the question of the Repeal of the Union; let them carefully and skilfully poise and make the balance between conflicting parties; and it is not from Ireland that the call for Repeal would come. You would become so embarrassed and obstructed in your legislation here, that throughout all England there would be one unanimous call to send back the Irish members, and deliver your legislation from the burden.

I shall release you. Sir Robert Peel has stated as his excuse for this measure, that he had no other course to pursue. He said there were three courses open to us.

One was, to continue to give the grant, as it had been given before; another was, to leave to the Roman Catholics of Ireland the care and burden of providing for their college; and the third was, the course which the honourable gentleman adopted. My lord, I remember a Tipperary story of an orchard-man, who came to complain to a village schoolmaster, that he had found, not one boy, (according to the old story in the spelling book,) but three boys in his orchard, stealing apples; and he brought the delinquents before the master. The master was a very pompous person, and much more ambitious of using fine words, than careful of understanding them. So he shook his head—"You are a pretty trio." "Yes," said the orchard-man, "and your son is the worst trio of the three." I think we might say of Sir Robert Peel's choice, that the son of his adoption is the worst case of the three. Much more willingly would I abide by any of the others; much more willingly would I abide by that which was the giving £9,000 a-year; much more willingly by a College that was instituted by the Roman Catholic people of Ireland, than by Sir Robert Peel and by Sir James Graham. And I will say this for my Roman Catholic countrymen, that in my solemn conviction I do not believe there could be found in the Repeal Association in Ireland, a majority, which would endure the disgrace, of having taught at their expense the doctrines that my reverend brother has proved to be taught in Maynooth. I will venture to say, that if the Repeal Association would give my reverend brother a hearing—and a hearing they would give him, if the matter were properly placed before them—there would arise there a party that would pour indignant contempt on those abominable doctrines, and would say—Either the Romanism of Ireland must mend her manners, or we will renounce her communion.

My lord, this leads me to what, I am happy to say, is my concluding remark: I object to Sir Robert Peel's argument, not only because he made an injudicious choice, but because he did not put forward a correct argument. His induction was incomplete, because all the parts were not enumerated. He had many other courses open to him to pursue—courses to which it is not fit that I should advert. But here was one course that should have been made and regarded as an indispensable pre-requisite of all legislation; he

should have inquired before he decided. He says, that he was satisfied when he read the Maynooth report. If so, he was very easily satisfied. The Commissioners, who made the report, were not satisfied; nay, they were unable to agree upon the matters of most moment—those affecting the loyalty of a subject, and the good conduct of a citizen. They were not able to agree in pronouncing their opinion upon the manner in which the character of a subject, in those respects, was likely to be influenced by the doctrines of Maynooth. And surely it ought not to be regarded as a matter of so pressing moment, when the affair is of consequence so deep, that this measure cannot be postponed for another year, and in the mean time a solemn investigation of the subject had. It is one of those subjects, my lord, in which the Commissioners of past time, like Sir Robert Peel at the present, created their own difficulty. "Ireland," said Sir Robert Peel, some years since, "is my difficulty;" and immediately Ireland takes care to make his prophecy true. The Commissioners, by the course they adopted, created all their difficulty.

I will take the liberty, before I conclude, of sketching what should be the nature of an inquiry. The complainant against Maynooth—we will suppose my brother from Ireland—makes his statement, that there are taught within its walls, intolerant and anti-social doctrines; immoral and perfidious doctrines. Maynooth, we will suppose, denies it. Then it would seem to me, that the inquirers or the judges have no more to do with either the accuser or the accused. They are not to take the averments of the one against Maynooth as proofs; they are not to take the pleas of "not guilty" upon the part of Maynooth as evidence. These are simply the preliminaries necessary before the case is put to trial. They are to measure with the accusations on the one side, and the denials on the other, the evidence produced by both parties. My learned brother produces his evidence; and what is it? The books taught in Maynooth, and published and sold by the Maynooth agents, for their students; these are his evidences. What has the Parliament, then, or the inquirer to do? Simply this: Here are statements, said to be contained in your books; send us the copies of your books, that we may see, are these statements true? And next they have to

say, Can you show any passages in your books of instruction, in which these anti-social and immoral doctrines are pronounced and condemned, with the same explicitness as they are taught in these? Now I would say, that that was the course that Sir Robert Peel should have pursued. The course was easy. That application could be made to Maynooth, and before another year, the whole case would be before the eyes of England.

My lord, it would seem to me, that that is at present, the duty of England; to make inquiry into Romanism, and let a light be poured upon it, that will show all its hidden iniquities. England once did part of her duty nobly; and when she was crowned with success in war, and with prosperous commerce, she showed herself as the servant of the Most High; and instead of relaxing into luxury, or hardening herself in pride, she felt, that placed as she was on a pinnacle, on which, from every part of the civilised world, she could hear her fame repeated, it became her plain and solemn duty to be a servant of God; and therefore wherever the footfall of England was, there were tidings of peace and love; and wherever her banner arose, there went forth the Gospel. This was one part of the duty of England; and England appears to be as plainly set forth for the discharge of the other, as she was for the discharge of that. She has been so circumstanced, as that it is to be expected of her, that she will now expose error and intolerance, and unchristian doctrine, as she was ready in the past time, to send forth her Gospel. But it would be a cruel thing, if she were to give her Gospel to the rest of the world, and to give Maynooth to her subjects in Ireland.

We heard an interesting statement from one, whose name and character gives it authority (Sir D. Mackworth,) of what is the condition of the Christian world now, upon the continent. We were told that there are champions for the faith, rising up in various places, and contending against Romanism. Shall England go back, while they are going forward?

And he told us, further, that all these look to England. Everywhere, over the face of the civilized earth, there is carrying on a conflict, in which Rome is resisted; or aggressions, in which Rome is extending herself. And all this conflict is, to a great extent, in the dark; and England is so circumstanced, as to be the country, which has at once the power, and the freedom, and the duty, to enlighten this dark struggle. Prussia, Austria, France, Spain, Portugal, the States of Italy,—all these are shackled by some "concordats" with Rome, which forbid their free action. England alone is free, and England is powerful; and while the dark struggle goes through the world, in which faithful champions are resisting, it may be, unto the death, they are putting forth to England, we may say, the prayer of the heroic Greek, in Homer—"Dispel the darkness; pour light upon the struggle, and let us see what are our enemies, and what are our friends."

The coward shrinks in the dark. The timid politician rushes into greater dangers than the wise and bold one, because he contents himself, while he can rush upon them blindfold. Let it be our effort, and exertion, and prayer, that England shall not be this timid politician—fearless of offending God, and fearful of all else. Let it be our exertion, that, so far as we have the power, our legislation shall become better than it was. What is it at present? It seems to refer the discussion of principles to this Hall, the dictation of measures to the Conciliation Hall in Ireland, and the adjusting of details to itself in Parliament.

Let us urge, by all means in our power, for inquiry. I think we have seen how that inquiry can be conducted. Let it be the duty of England, and the delight and privilege of England, to pour light upon the struggle that is now going on in the world. And Ireland, and not alone Ireland but your own country, and foreign countries, and all the ends of the earth, the present generation and the generations to come, will bless God, for that England stood faithful in the time of difficulty.

THE TRUTH IN THE CHURCH.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. JOSEPH HASLEGRAVE, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH, ISLINGTON, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
MAY 4, 1845.

On behalf of the Week-day and Sunday Schools connected with the Church.

"That the truth of the Gospel might continue with you."—Gal. ii. 5.

THE fall and restoration of man are subjects of deepest and vital importance. That we are fallen in Adam, our own bitter experience affords ample testimony; that we are restored in Christ, by whom we obtain greater blessings than our father lost, is the grand discovery, made to us in the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. It was communicated in the first promise, which, like the rainbow, gilded the gloom, that thickened around man in his transgression; it was shadowed forth in types and ceremonies; it received a gradual development, until the Day-Star from on high visited us, and Jesus brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." We need not wonder that a gem of such transcendent lustre was preserved amid the ruins of our sin-blighted world. The providence of God watched over it; and a succession of holy men, whose hearts God had impressed with a sense of its value, guarded it with unearthly care. But these holy

lent patriarchs down to the last in the noble army of confessors and martyrs, were not ignorant of the dangers which threatened its destruction, and therefore they manfully resisted every attempt to injure or subvert it, and laboured to transmit it unscathed to the latest generation. We have a noble instance of this in the conduct of the apostle, to which our text has reference. An error had very early crept into the Church on the all-important and essential doctrine of justification. A council assembled at Jerusalem on the subject, at which the apostle Paul was present. His conduct on that occasion is remarkable and instructive. For though, as he tells us, he had himself frequently practised things he knew to be abolished by the Gospel, which in themselves were indifferent, and when there was no danger of men being led to rest in them as necessary to salvation, yet, as soon as "false brethren came in privily, to spy out their liberty" which they had in Christ, that they might, if possible, bring them again under the yoke of ceremonies, as though

such observances were indispensable to salvation, he then at once acted as the occasion required; for to such false teachers, says he, "we did not give place" by any compliance or subjection to their demands, "no, not for an hour," but firmly entered our protest against their principles and their practices, "that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you." It were well for Christians, and for Christian Churches, to copy such example—not to disturb the peace and unity of the Church for things, in themselves indifferent; but when any thing is enforced as essential to salvation, which strikes at the root of the doctrines of truth, then to enter firm and Christian protest, and give no place to any unscriptural principles, "that the truth of the Gospel may continue with us."

Such being the instruction we may collect from the conduct of the apostle on the memorable occasion referred to, it will not, I apprehend, be deemed at variance with the spirit and sentiment of our text, if in connection with

I have this morning to advocate, I deduce and illustrate the following position—that it is the duty of the Church of England, to maintain those principles, and to hand down unimpaired those truths, which so undeniably distinguish her as a pure branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church.

I. In the illustration, then, of this principle, I remark in the first place—That the truth of the Gospel is essentially embodied in the doctrinal articles, and the devotional services of the Established Church. It seems scarcely necessary to go into any proof of this, as it has been so generally admitted even by those who on minor points have dissented from us. One of her articles asserts, that "Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." Thus the basis on which rests her whole superstructure, is the Word of God;

and she fearlessly challenges inquiry, and demands to be tried by that unerring standard, as to the claims which she puts forth, of being "the pillar and ground of the truth." She has stood that test, and silenced every fair objection for upwards of 300 years; and never perhaps, will it be known till the disclosures of the great day declare it, what blessings on the one hand, and what responsibility on the other, have rested on our land, in the possession of a scriptural Church, which, under God, has preserved England sound in the faith, amid the heterodoxy of the surrounding nations. There is no one truth contained in the Bible, which does not appear interwoven in her services; and what is of vast importance, those truths are every one of them brought forward throughout her ecclesiastical year with a distinctness, and yet with a beautiful consistency and harmony, according to the analogy of faith. Her doctrines are made the principles of action, her duties are made to spring from her principles; her prayers are at once so simple, and yet so comprehensive, that the hungry soul cannot go away unfed, the penitent cannot depart uncondemned, and the wanderer cannot leave unwarned. And what, to my mind, has ever appeared peculiarly and distinctively scriptural in our Church is, that she has been content to take the wide range of the Bible as the Spirit has indited it, not caring to reconcile apparently conflicting statements—apparently only, because of our imperfect knowledge. Thus, she teaches the sovereignty of God, and the free agency and accountability of man—the sinner's moral inability to obey the Divine commands, and yet his guilt and condemnation in disobedience—the free and universal invitation of the Gospel, entreating men to accept of mercy, and yet the necessity of a Divine influence to incline the heart to embrace it—God's universal love in the gift of His Son for a perishing world, and yet His electing love to the vessels of mercy, chosen in Christ. And these doctrines, in all their fullness and freeness, the Church teaches in the way in which the Scriptures enforce them. The sovereignty of God is the ground of the humility of the creature; the inability of the sinner is his reason for prayer; and the promises of the covenant is to encourage faith, that though in ourselves we are lost, yet in Christ we have strength and salvation; and all the relative duties of life, whatever may be the changing

views of worldly policy, are as the fruits of such doctrines. So that the minister in our scriptural Zion may stand forth the freeman of the Lord Jesus, and declare the whole counsel of God, and appeal to his hearers—"I write none other things than what ye read and acknowledge, and I trust ye shall acknowledge even unto the end."

But it would be impossible in the limits of a single discourse to investigate the leading doctrines of our Church, and the place she assigns them in the harmony of grace. I must therefore invite your study of them, and comparing of them with the Bible, satisfied that you will rise from the perusal, more than ever attached to the Church of your fathers, and blessing God for having in His infinite mercy planted so pure and apostolic a branch of His universal Church in our land. I pass on therefore, in the further illustration of the position I laid down, to remark—

II. That the venerable fathers of the Reformation, both in their lives and by their deaths, evinced a deep anxiety that the truth of the Gospel, by means of a scriptural Church, might continue with us. Let me here remark, that the object of the Reformers was not to found a Church, but to advance and promote the cause of Divine truth, through its agency; they therefore took the then existing Church, of which they were members, and compared her doctrines and practices with the Word of God and with the Churches in the primitive ages of Christianity. The result was, that they discovered a fearful departure from the truth, and they set themselves in the strength of God, to purify the Church, to reduce her to the model of Scripture, and to restore her to her former beauty and purity. To accomplish this, they gave themselves to prayer and to labour; God blessed their labours, guided their counsels, and crowned their efforts with success. They persevered in giving us the Scriptures in our own tongue; they compared most diligently the liturgies of the ancient Churches with the Word of God; they expunged whatever they found contrary thereto; they altered that which differed from the analogy of faith; and they have left us, through the mercy of our God, —who overruled the whole to His glory—that "form of sound words," which some, not in communion with us, have declared to rank highest in sound doctrine, devotional fervour, and holy aspirations, that can be found among uninspired composi-

tions. And, brethren, what did they gain as a recompense for their toils? Read it, in the exchange of honour for contempt, of wealth for poverty, of palaces for the dungeon, of friends for enemies, of robes for the fire-sheet, of life for death. Read it in their every footstep through scorp, derision, mockery, insult, persecution, the fire and the sword; and you trace in their heart's-blood, the deep anxiety which alone made them careful for the honour of God, and "that the truth of the Gospel might continue with us." Hear it in the language of the venerable Latimer to his suffering brother, Ridley, when called upon to pass through the fire to the crown of martyrdom—"Be of good comfort and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle in England, as by God's grace, shall never be put out." Hear it also in the words of Ridley himself—"Wherefore, ye that be my true lovers and friends, rejoice and rejoice with me again, and render with me hearty thanks to God our heavenly Father, that for His Son's sake, my Redeemer and Saviour, He hath vouchsafed to call me—to call me, I say, unto this high dignity of His true prophets, of His faithful apostles, and of His holy elect and chosen martyrs, that is, to die, and to spend this temporal life, in the defence and maintenance of His eternal and everlasting truth." Cranmer, too, thus testifies—"But if the adversaries of truth will not admit mine appeal, God's will be done; I pass not upon it, so that God may therein be glorified, be it by my life or by my death. For it is much better for me to die in Christ's quarrel and to reign with Him, than here to be shut up and kept in the prison of this body, unless it were to continue yet still a while in this warfare, for the commodity and profit of my brethren, and to the further advancing of God's glory, to whom be all glory for evermore." But time would fail to speak of that noble army of martyrs, who loved not their lives unto death, but who, to secure to their posterity the inestimable blessings of the Gospel, "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods," and thought not these blessings too dearly purchased at the cost of their own lives.

And what is the argument which may be drawn from the conduct of these holy men? What but this?—

III. That it becomes us their children, blessed with such privileges, sealed with the blood of our ancestors, to be alive to the importance of maintaining them, and

handing them down unimpaired to our children's children.

Gratitude demands this at our hands; the mercy of God in the bestowment of them, and the salvation of souls which is so closely bound up in them, enforce this duty upon us. In fact, inattention to it betrays indifference, and indifference in such momentous things must be criminal, and proves not only an absence of the power of religion on our hearts, but stamps us as traitors to our God. If religion be any thing, it is every thing. If the solemn disclosures which the Gospel makes, if the doctrines it teaches and the consequences it deduces, be true, then to be indifferent argues man to be dead to his best interests, and to be trifling with that on which depends his eternal state. And surely, brethren, if men be anxious and persevering and brave in securing temporal freedom and national liberty, oh! shall the Christian, actuated by the love of Christ, the most constraining principle, be afraid or unwilling or indifferent, to perpetuate the truth which sets free the immortal spirit, and obtain, so far as human instrumentality can, the blessings of salvation to children yet unborn? And, perhaps, never was there a time like the present, when Christian men are called upon to decide whether they will avow their determination to uphold the truth of the Gospel, or suffer the enemies of all religion to triumph in its overthrow. As a Protestant Church and nation, we are assailed and threatened with destruction. Popery is growing into colossal strength; infidelity, her natural issue, under the mask of latitudinarianism, is eating our very vitals; lawlessness, the twin sister of infidelity in all her fearful forms, has convulsed one portion of the empire; and these leagued together for the overthrow of what they know to be the great breakwater against the progress of error of every kind—the Established Church. We need indeed, to humble ourselves before God; for a length of time, the enemy has been approaching, and we have been inactive. There has been a growing indifference, and by consequence a fearful departure from the spirit and principles of the Reformation. But, we trust, our very dangers are bringing us back to first principles; and though the great tribulation which the primitive Church looked for from the future antichrist may be at our doors, evidenced by the spirit of liberal latitudinarianism which is everywhere prevailing, denying truth even as it espouses error, still

amid these fearful and portentous signs, we may hear the rumbling of His chariot wheels and pray, 'Almighty Lord appear—appear, on behalf of Thy Church. Cause the light to burn more brightly amongst us; purify us by whatever discipline; only give us grace to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."' And in doing this, I need not say, that as Christians we are bound to strive lawfully; and to strive lawfully is to strive consistently with the principles of the Gospel itself.

First, then, let me say, would we most effectually promote the interests of Divine truth, *we must ourselves embrace the truth.* We may belong to the purest Church, we may profess the most scriptural creed, we may enjoy the richest privileges, we may have a name to live, and yet be dead, be barren, be unfruitful. Orthodoxy of the head will never save us, if there be not the sanctifying faith of the heart; nor shall we recommend our creed to unbelievers, or strike conviction in the minds of those in error, especially on the fundamental truths of the Deity and atonement of Christ, and justification by faith alone, unless we exhibit in our life, character, and conversation, the practical effects of those glorious truths, and thereby prove they are not mere abstract speculations, but sanctifying principles.

And then, having embraced the truth, I would say, "*contend earnestly for the truth*"—not in the spirit of party, not in the pride of reason, not with any secular motives, but because of its vitality and importance to the present and eternal well-being of man. And as the truth itself is but a modification of love, let your contention be in the spirit of love, seeking to reclaim those that are in error, in meekness and affection. And see to it, my brethren, that it is the *truth* you are contending for. How lamentable the Christian world should be so divided—how mournful the spectacle to see those who hold the Head even Christ, for minor points contending with a spirit adverse of that charity which "hopeth all things, endureth all things!" Let it not be so with you; rather strive to "*keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,*" loving all that "*love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth.*" Remember, at present we know but in part, and no wonder, therefore, that in things of less importance there should be differences; only let them not produce bitterness, where love should be the binding link; merge every non-essential dis-

tinction in the thought of that blessed world of perfection above, where all will have but one heart and one way.

But in essentials, my brethren, let not false charity, or a spurious liberality, lead you astray; there ought to be, there can be no compromise of one saving truth. While you are called upon to love all your fellow-creatures, of whatever colour, and of whatever creed, to pray for them and seek to do them good, you cannot recognise them as fellow Christians, or bid them God-speed, if they hold not the Head which is Christ, or are wedded to a system altogether antichristian. If the glorious truths of the Gospel be darkened, obacured, or denied, and particularly that of a sinner's acceptance with God, whether it issue from the heartless creed of Socinianism, or the anti-scriptural doctrines of Popery, or the delusions of the human heart, under whatever name or distinction or authority it be put forth, like the great apostle of the Gentiles ye must contend, and must not yield even for a moment, "*that the truth of the Gospel may continue with you.*" And remember, ye most effectually and legitimately contend for the truth, by gladly availing yourselves of every opportunity for inculcating sound religious principles.

And this leads me, the last place, briefly to remark—

IV. That the education of the young in the principles of Divine truth, as embodied and taught in the formularies of our Church, must commend itself as a means at once simple and efficient. If, as I have endeavoured to show, the Church of England is pre-eminently a scriptural Church—if it was the desire of the fathers of the reformation in their framing the Articles and Services of that Church, to perpetuate the truth of the Gospel—if we stand indebted to them, under God, for the privileges, civil and religious, we enjoy—if it be our duty to convey to others, what we have so freely and richly received ourselves, then must it be admitted, that no better means can be used, than to indoctrinate our children in the distinctive principles of our Reformed Church, as set forth in her authorized creeds and formularies; assured, that in doing this, we are most effectually teaching and perpetuating the all-glorious truths of the Gospel itself. We have, however, neglected this important safeguard, I will call it, of our national ark. The distinctive principles of the Reformation have not been taught,

either in the schools of the great or the poor. The consequence has been what might have been expected; we have grown up ignorant of Protestantism; we have lost sight of the real character of Popery; we have become, through a false charity, latitudinarian in our sentiments; and are we to wonder, that even in high places, such a spirit should be manifested, either of ignorance or contempt of God's truth, and such an awful determination to favour and to propagate the system, whose boast is, that it is changeless, though history convicts it of the blood of martyred millions, for no other offence than for the truth's sake? My brethren, we must return to the school of the Reformers; we must study the Bible as they did, teach our children on their principles, and have in all our National, Sunday, and Infant Schools, the blessed truths enforced, which gave them a martyr's crown, and enabled them to triumph, even as they fell. Nothing short of this, in these perilous days, can save us as a Church and nation. Nothing else successfully resist the aggressive movements of the Papacy, or put to shame the inconsistency of professing with the lip the Protestant faith, and supporting with the hand the Romish apostasy. The battle of the Reformation must be fought over again, and the scene of action must be in our schools. And I only ask your support, my brethren, this day, on behalf of the Week-day and the Sunday Schools connected with this Church, on the ground, that therein are taught the saving truths of the Gospel, able to make even a child wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus; that those truths are taught as our own most pure and apostolic branch of the Church Catholic has received and expounded them; that the great Protestant doctrines are distinctly set forth, and the children instructed to understand why they are called Protestants, and against what awful errors that name protests. And oh! my brethren, the solemn importance of such teaching may become apparent sooner, perhaps, than we think. Things are wearing an aspect, for which we ourselves need to stand prepared, but most certainly, for which our children should be trained and armed. The call, then, made upon you this day, will doubtless meet with a response that will prove you to be in earnest in your love for the truth, and your contention for it. It is a

matter of thankfulness, that our Schools thus far should have been so prospered of you and blessed of God; but, brethren, much as my heart rejoices for the grace which abounds amongst us, yet it is cause for solemn thought, that we are still far short of what a Church ought to be in its congregated members. Should it not be, that though being many, we should all feel ourselves members of one body, and in what appertains to its good, all should vigorously unite, and each member, according to his ability, act? And surely, if there be one object more than another which can justly claim our united effort, it is for the right training and scriptural teaching of the children of our poorer neighbours; and yet, permit me to say, there are 200 families, or parts of families, members by occupancy of sittings in this Church, whose names do not appear as subscribers to our schools. We want a more general and united effort in our "works of faith and labours of love;" and thankful should I be, if this day, beside the collections at the doors, we shall be privileged to receive fresh names for subscriptions, however small, because it would be an additional bond, strengthening and uniting us together. And think, my brethren, for what we are soliciting your aid. It is for the children before you—and of children, did not your Saviour say, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven, their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven?" Should but one of these little ones educated in your Schools be finally saved, that would alone repay every effort and every sacrifice; should only one child shed tears of repentance, those tears would move the harps of heaven; should only one believe in Jesus, that would cause fresh joy in the ranks of the blessed. Should one of these little ones meet you hereafter before the throne, that meeting would neither lessen the joy of your song, nor dim the lustre of your crown. Prove then, by your liberality this day, your love to the Saviour, your love to the lambs of His flock; prove that you value the Church of your fathers, and the cause of truth, of which that Church is the mighty bulwark, and because it is so, is the object of the enemy's deadliest hate, and ought therefore to be of your warmest affection and support.

THE FIRE ALREADY KINDLED.

A SERMON, BY THE REV. W. L. ALEXANDER, A.M.

PREACHED AT SUNKY CHAPEL, ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, MAY 14, 1845.
One of the Annual Sermons on behalf of the London Missionary Society.

"I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?"—
Luke xii. 49.

WAS it required or expected of the preacher on such an occasion as the present, to lay before his audience new views of the Missionary enterprise, or present to them new arguments in favour of Missionary efforts, there are few men who, without presumption, would occupy the post in which I am now privileged to stand. After more than fifty years of attention, of experience, and of effort, directed to this subject, by men of the highest talents and of the most devoted piety, it were idle to expect that any thing yet remained to be learned, either as to the true nature, or the just claims of the missionary work. All, we may rest assured, has been already said on these topics that requires to be said; and all that can be desired or expected now, is it to reiterate familiar truths, to enforce arguments that have been often advanced, to press motives which have frequently been urged, and thus to stir up the minds of the audience, not so much by way of instruction as by way of remembrance. With this understanding of the design of the present service, I appear before you to attempt the discharge of the duty which has been laid upon me.

In the passage which I have read to supply the topics of discourse, we have our Lord's own statement of the aspect under which He contemplated the intention of His advent on the earth, and the feelings with which He regarded it. As the verse appears in the common version, it is not easy to gather the precise idea of the latter clause of it. A very slight alteration, however, will bring the version in conformity with the original, and present our Lord's idea clearly to the mind of the reader. Instead of—"What will I, if it be already kindled?" let us read—"How I wish it were already kindled" or more forcibly—"I would that it were already kindled!" and we shall have, I apprehend, the true sense of the passage. The language of our Lord is expressive, not of inquiry, but of desire; and it conveys to us an utterance of His ardent and anxious wish, that the design, the object for which He came, were already accomplished. To a series of remarks on the subject thus brought before us, let me now solicit your attention; and may He, who uttered the words we are about to meditate upon,

vouchsafe to be present with us, and by His good Spirit enable us to comprehend aright the design of His advent, and to enter into those considerations, which prompted Him to so ardent a desire for the accomplishment of that design.

I. Let us consider the design of our Lord's advent, as here announced by Himself.

Were a person, ignorant of the doctrines of Christianity, to be made acquainted with its leading historical facts, it would be impossible for him to resist the conclusion, that in this series of occurrences there was something; not only peculiar, but indicative of a direct adaptation towards an end; and his natural impulse would constantly be to urge the inquiry—To what end was all this designed to conduce? That the Deity should become incarnate; that in this mysterious complexity of existence, He should live upon this earth; exemplifying all the features of a good and perfect man, in union with the majesty and power of Godhead; giving undeniable evidence of a condescension and love no heart could ever reach, and of authority no power, human, elemental, or demoniac, could resist; spend His life here in sorrow, in poverty, and humiliation, and close it by submitting to a cruel and ignominious death—all this must be held to be so strange, so unprecedented, so entirely removed from the ordinary experience of men, and it is so utterly incredible and impossible that such a series of events could have occurred without a special design on the part of God, to the accomplishment of some preternatural important end, that we may naturally conclude the mind of such an inquirer as I have supposed, would be on the rack with an anxious, and all-absorbing curiosity, to discover what the end would be, and in what way this most extraordinary history was associated with the accomplishment of that end. As if anticipating the inquiry to which I have adverted, our Lord takes frequent opportunities to announce the nature of His work, and the design of His mission. In these different announcements, we perceive in every case the same great essential truths, though the forms may vary in which the truths are set forth. Indeed, each peculiar aspect in which our Lord's work is viewed by Him

is a characteristic variety, which tends both to enlarge and rectify our views on the subject.

When He contemplates His work in relation to the fallen condition of our race, His announcement of His design is this—"I am come to seek and to save the lost." When He views it in relation to the redemption He was to accomplish, He speaks of it as being "a ransom price for many." When He views it in its relation to God, His exclamation to the Father is, "I have come to glorify Thee on the earth." When He viewed it in regard to Himself, His representation was, that He had come into this far country "to get Himself a kingdom." And when He viewed it in relation to the world at large, He announced Himself as the light of the world—as "a light to lighten the Gentiles"—as "the Bread that came down from heaven, of which if a man eat he will never die"—as having living Water to bestow, of which "whosoever drinketh shall never thirst"—as Him who had come "not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

In all these representations the same great idea is either expressed or shadowed forth—namely, that the mystery of our Lord's incarnation and life and passion had no other design, nothing less than the undoing of all that sin had produced in our world,—that out of that dark and formless chaos into which the whole spiritual creation here had been thrown, He might produce a new order of things, where for man there should be purity, dignity, and joy; and for God, the re-establishment in glory and in majesty of His full authority over the heart and the conscience of man.

The announcement of our Lord's passion and work given in the passage before us, belongs to the last of the classes above enumerated; those, namely, in which its general bearings on the ignorant, the guilty creatures of our race, is proclaimed. The language in which it is couched is figurative, but the figure is of such frequent use, that there is no difficulty in understanding it. In the Old Testament prophecy, the advent of the Messiah had been described as an event, which should result in the purging away from the Church of God of all filth, "by the Spirit of burning;" in the utterance of the prophetic voice it had been foretold of the Messiah, that He "should sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, to purify the sons of Levi, and purge them like gold and silver, that they should offer unto God an offering in righteousness." In these passages the idea of purification and refinement is most distinctly brought before us by the symbolic language, in which the design of the

Messiah's mission is described; and it is in reference apparently to the same idea, applying to Himself this description of the Messiah, that our Lord uses the words now before us.

By some interpreters, indeed, their application has been restricted to those dissensions and fiery controversies, which the religion of Christ has, through the hostility of mankind, been instrumental in producing in our world. And to this they have been led by the allusion our Lord himself makes to these dissensions, in subsequent verses of this chapter. But this interpretation can hardly be admitted, for these dissensions and controversies are not necessary, far less essential, parts of our Lord's work, but clearly the results springing out of the evil state of man's heart, and it cannot be to the collateral and accidental results of the circumstances among which He comes, that our Lord alludes. "I am come to send fire on the earth." It does appear a very weak and impotent interpretation of such an assertion to represent it as meaning nothing more than the quarrels among men, which may be its result. And when our Lord adds His deep and ardent wish, that the result of His advent which He pointed at were actually realised, we cannot, I think, for a moment, rest satisfied with such an interpretation of the words as I have just indicated. By the fire here spoken of, which our Lord had said He came to send on the earth, is to be understood that purifying, remodelling, renovating power which He came to diffuse through the mass of our race. He came not merely to deliver a message, and to do by it an appointed work, but by means of that message and in consequence of that work, to set the world on fire. He came to revolutionise the world by infusing into it a new element of spiritual life and activity. His design is to make all things new; to improve what is susceptible of improvement, to purify what needs amendment, and is at the same time capable of passing through that searching furnace unconsumed; to burn up, and for ever devour, all that is vile and accursed; to bring the interests of heaven and hell on earth into fierce, fiery, and final conflict; to send a penetrating and searching flame of separation into all the concerns of human society, that what is vile and ungodly may be purged out of them, and what is sincere and useful may be preserved and illustrated. In short, to melt and fuse the whole fabric of earthly relations, that out of its elemental parts His plastic hand may construct a more perfect form of being, and thereby cover this earth which God has made, with a race of beings worthier of Him who made them, and of that fair

and fertile world which He has given them to inhabit.

This great change which our Lord had come to commence, finds its basis in His sacrificial work; and the means by which it is to be carried forward, are the promulgation of the mighty truths connected with that work. The cause of all disorder, confusion, pollution, sorrow and suffering on our earth, is sin. It is this which has poisoned the fountains of human well-being; it is this that disorders the mechanism of human society; which has spread over this earth a curse, under which the whole creation groans. The first step, therefore, to ameliorate this state of things, must consist in finding something, which shall have power enough to take away sin. So long as sin remains, evil, and gloom, and sorrow, must overhang our earth; but let sin be removed, and the removal of the cause will be followed by the cessation of all the evils the presence of that cause has occasioned and perpetuated. Now the only way in which sin can be removed from the conscience of the man by whom it has been committed, is by his being fully forgiven all the guilt of sin, and perfectly cleansed of all the pollution of sin, by God. But will God, can God, thus purify the sinner? The answer comes to us from the cross of Christ. On that tree of pain and agony, hung the Lord of glory, suffering, dying, as a propitiation for the sins of men. No crime against God or man had bound him there. Through every period of His life below, He had presented the hitherto unparalleled spectacle of a man in whom there was no sin; He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;" yet there He hung, numbered with transgressors, counted for a sinner; esteemed by His infuriated murderers as an outcast from God, they viewed Him as the despised of men. Of a scene so strange, of a fact so anomalous, but one explanation can be given; and it is the explanation which the Bible supplies, when it notifies, that it was as a sacrifice for sin that He expired, that He there bore the load of human iniquity, that He was treated as a sinner; that it was because He was "made sin for us," that He thus endured the shame and the agony which none but a sinner deserved. Through the sacrificial work of Christ, the way is opened for the communication of pardon, and every other benefit of God to man. All obstacles arising from the claims of Divine justice and law, have thus been removed, and a channel thrown open, along which the Divine beneficence can flow, in a free and plentiful stream, even to the chief of sinners. A fatal blow has thus been struck at the dominion

of sin in our world, and a provision made for its final overthrow. When Jesus, brethren, expired on the cross, a whole spiritual empire was blasted; not the empire of Him who suffered, but of that malignant tyrant, through whose malice and contrivance these sufferings had come to be endured. Around that cross, as He hung upon it, were gathered the fierce and howling manifestations of man's enmity to God; but from that cross there beamed forth the brightest and the strongest expressions of God's beneficence to man. If it might be said of those that crucified Christ, that Satan was in them, prompting them to this work of hate against the majesty of heaven, of Christ we can say with still greater assurance, that "God was in Him, reconciling the world unto Himself." In the one transaction, hell did its utmost to win the day; but heaven neutralized hell's power, by the very act that most signally displayed it. The fire which consumed the sacrifice upon that mystic altar, was fiercer than the fire of Tophet; but it was a fire that cleanses, that brings renovation and purity to a world of polluted and perishing sinners.

As it was necessary that this fire should be kindled first on the altar of atonement, so it is only as our torch is irradiated on that altar, that we can spread the sacred flame through the world. The only means by which we can hope to ransom and purify our fallen race, is by making known to each individual of it, the great facts and doctrines connected with the sacrificial work of Christ. All other means will prove inefficient. The lessons of philosophy, the results of science, the refinements of art, the attraction of poetry, the eloquence of intreaty, the wit of statesmen, the gravity of senates, the authority of schools, the pomp and circumstance of war, mighty as these powers are, for modifying human character, and moulding the form of human society, they are impotent to effect the deep and lasting, and complete transformation, of which we speak. They may change the outward customs and habits of a people, by persuading men to forsake the degrading pursuits of a brutalizing savageism, and adopt the manners of civilized life. And if even this be so far beyond the power of human resources, that it yet remains to be shown in what quarter of the globe such changes by such means have, to any extent, been introduced, we may, with the utmost confidence affirm, that for the spiritual renovation, for the sanctification of our race, such means are wholly impotent. They fail to reach the heart of man, to transform the moral taste and tendencies of the sinner, to make

him that has hated God to love God, to bring him that has rolled sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue to hate it with a perfect hatred, and to desire nothing so much as entire and perpetual deliverance from it; to reclaim from all folly, and impurity, and guile, a whole race, so that the sun in his wide course shall not look upon a single spot on this earth, where man degrades himself, injures his fellow, or insults his God; to restore this sin-cursed world to the glories of its early day, when man bore the unsullied image of his Maker, and God was enthroned in the heart of man, and angels were man's familiar guests; in short, to sweep into a huge pile, the accumulated rottenness of earth, and utterly and for ever to burn it up—for this, brethren, there is but one element that is sufficient, and it is that sacred and inextinguishable flame which was kindled by the Divine hand upon that altar, on which were expiated the sins of the world by the sacrifice there offered.

The sufficiency of the doctrine of Christ for the moral renovation of our race, is certified to us, not only by the express assurances of Scripture, but by its own Divinely instituted adaptation to that end. As the God of nature has instituted fire to burn whatever is combustible, so that we have only to expose what is combustible to the action of that element, in order to consume it, in like manner has the same God given to the doctrine of salvation through the mediation of Christ, the natural adaptation to consume and destroy every thing evil in the breasts of men.

In Scripture, the doctrine of Christ is presented to us in a mode altogether adapted to the form of man's mind; exciting and gratifying his love of knowledge by the information it imparts, enlightening his understanding by the principles it inculcates, warming and elevating his imagination by the splendid prospects it unfolds, and enlisting his affections by the powerful motives it brings into view. In substance, it is closely adapted to our wants, and powerfully fitted to sway us to those courses which end in assimilation to the moral image of God.

It finds us ignorant of God, and it unfolds to us His true character in such a manner, that it is impossible to receive the statement it supplies, without mingled emotions of admiration, gratitude, and awe. It finds us all dread in the prospect of appearing before God, because of sin; and it takes us to the cross, and shows us there, how sin has been done away, by the sacrifice which God has already accepted in our behalf. It finds us jealous of God, and distrustful of

all intercourse with Him, and dreading nothing more than the arrival of a messenger from Him; and it takes us to a point from which the great "mystery of godliness" discovers itself to our view; it shows us how the Deity himself came forward from the unapproachable splendours of His secret dwelling, and put aside the clouds and darkness which are His pavilion, and stooped down on this lower world, and announced Himself as a messenger to man, and bade the fears of a conscience-stricken sinner to disperse, for He had come "not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." It finds us in love with sin, adverse to the law of God, and consecrating our best energies to the service of self and the world; and it teaches us that sin is the curse and the crime of man; that the law of God is holy, just, and good; that His commands are not grievous; that in keeping of them there is great reward; and that the love and service of God in body, soul, and spirit, is at once the supreme duty, the supreme dignity, and highest happiness of man. It finds us the slaves of sin, subject to the tyranny of the passions, and bearing about the degraded badge of servitude to Satan; and it comes to tell us that subjection to spiritual thralldom is not a fatal necessity, but a criminal choice; that man is his own master in spite of his spiritual foe, if he will, and that there needs but the application of the living and the life-giving truths of Christ's Gospel, to obtain for us the glorious liberty of the sons of God—the liberty of doing our Father's bidding, the liberty of acting in harmony with the great presiding mind and controlling will of the universe. It finds mankind associated together by a curiously complicated influence, which, like that of the magnet, at once draws and repels its fellow; now drawing men together by a sense of common interest, and now forcing men asunder by a sense of reciprocal danger; and it bids us look at these bonds as unnatural and mischievous; that, notwithstanding the diversities of outward circumstance, all men are brethren, and that the only real and permanent bond of human association is founded upon the common relationship of all men to God, prompting all "to do unto others, as they would that others should do unto them." It finds us surrounded with sorrow, anxiety, and pain, exposed to the ravages of disease, the assaults of disappointment, and the stroke of death; and it offers to us a balm for every wound, a cordial for every care, a remedy for every sorrow, and bids us dry up our tears, and let not our hearts be troubled, for Jesus has left us below a "peace which passeth all understanding,"

and which the world cannot give, and cannot take away. It finds us standing pale, and anxious, and trembling, before a dark curtain that overhangs futurity, conscious of immortality, with thoughts that spite of earth's cares and earth's carousals run on to eternity, but at the same time ever backward in our attempts to plant the footstep of a firm speculation or a reasonable hope, on the confines of that great unknown; and it lifts up that impervious veil, and displays the unseen world to our view, and bids us rejoice that, in the still and unsullied plains of heaven there remaineth a rest, an inheritance, that is incorruptible.

Thus does this doctrine come to repair earth, and secure for us happiness in the world to come. Such are the lessons Christianity teaches, such the moral power by which her supremacy over the mind of our race is to be secured. Is there any one found to say that the means are not adapted to the end? that they are not inherently fitted to the purpose for which they are designed? What is there wanting to the scheme? What part of it betrays defect in knowledge, defect in skill, or defect in power, on the part of the Author of it? Where is there a broken or a feeble link in this mighty chain, by which it is proposed to bind man to man, and all men to God? We challenge investigation; we provoke scrutiny; we demand inquiry. Tell us, ye masters of philosophy, tell us if your keen eye, practised in the light of analysis, and trained to the most searching scrutiny, can detect in this Divine specific for the remedy of a world's woes, aught that can justify your predicting the failure of our hopes. We bid you apply your most powerful tests, we bid you summon your most powerful energies, we bid you apply your most microscopic scrutiny, and we rest assured that nothing will be detected by you in this scheme, unworthy of its Divine Author, or indicative of unfitness for the end which it is designed to secure. Do you admire our hope? are you startled at our confidence? does our glorying offend you? We reply that our assurance is not presumption; the experience of all ages and of many lands stands forth to lend its sanction to the voice of inspiration, which declares that the "Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."

Thus is this doctrine adapted to the great objects for which it was designed. The religion of Jesus Christ has been sent forth by its great Author, as a mighty fire, to purify and remodel the world. In accomplishing this great work, Christianity begins with indivi-

duals, and by successive conquests over the corruptions and guilt of individual souls, advances to the salvation of multitudes, and the renovation of the race.

On this head it behoves us to guard against two opposite extreme opinions into which some have fallen. There are some, on the one hand, who have felt as if nothing were gained for the cause of Christ, because they do not see the baptism of thousands at once, because they do not hear of nations being born in a single day; whilst, on the other hand, there are not a few, who, fixing their regards too exclusively upon the relation of Christianity to individuals, are satisfied if they see one and another within the region of their own knowledge, brought under the sanctifying power of Divine truth. Both these states of mind we hold to be erroneous. The error of the one consists in the overlooking of the fact, that men can be converted in the mass, only by the successive conversion of each individual in the mass; the error of the other lies, in forgetting that the conversion of each individual is, as regards the ultimate design of Christianity, only so much gained towards the conversion of the mass. The "fire" which Christ sent into the world, is to enwrap the whole world in its purifying blaze; but then it is to do so only by being kindled in heart after heart, and warming and sanctifying home after home. And wherever this sacred fire is experienced, it will stretch forth its lambent flame to fasten on new objects, and accomplish new transformations. It comes not like the lightning, appearing suddenly in the east, and darting instantaneously to the west. It comes with a slow, steady, and advancing flame. At first its light falls amidst the corruptions of some solitary path; but gradually it extends its light, and heat, and purifying influence, until, passing into a mighty conflagration, it encircles whole countries and continents. Christianity achieves its conquest, not in those great conflicts where the fate of a nation is decided on one field of battle, but by doing battle in detail with the powers of darkness in each individual bosom; and then, as each individual is won, pledging him to the cause of the Conqueror, she sends him forth, to seek new laurels for the Conqueror's brow. Let us not, then, "despise the day of small things." Let us not think little of the conversion of individuals. O sure! it is a great thing when this "fire" is so much as kindled, it is a great thing when so much as a single torch is lighted, around which many others stand ready to catch the flame. But, on the other hand, whilst we cannot magnify overmuch the value of

Christianity to individuals, let us beware of giving the slightest countenance to the feeling that Christianity has fulfilled her mission, when she has brought one here, and another there, under the power of her sanctifying truth. Her mission is to the race; her field of conquest is the world. She spurns all narrower limits; her empyreal temple refuses to be fettered within less extended bounds. She knows that He who sent her forth, sent her forth to subdue the wide earth. She knows that He who sent her forth, has made atonement for the world's sin; she knows that He wills the world's salvation, that He wears the world's crown, and that He sits upon His throne, until every enemy shall have been placed beneath His footstool, and He shall come forth amidst the world's plaudits, to assert universal empire. Instinct with Divine energy derived from Him, Christianity claims for herself free space and unlimited diffusion, that, rising to the full height of her majesty, she may pass her peaceful shadow over the entire world, and hold the nations in her protected keeping.

As she advances to the accomplishment of her purpose, and attainment of her triumph, she must, of necessity, come into collision with much that men have been accustomed to value and to revere. Many of the forms of social life, many of the bulwarks of earthly policy, many of the institutions of human intercourse, are the mere offspring of sensual taste and habits, or, at the best, mere artificial contrivances for the effecting of a compromise between the good and the evil that are strangely mixed up in the tissue of our mortal life. With all these expedients Christianity must, in the course of her progress, come into collision; not perhaps, in every case, by open and avowed assault, in consequence of the energy of those principles which she imbeds in some of her disciples, and which are silently but surely overpowering whatever is incompatible with the purity, the true dignity, and the universal brotherhood of man. Yet a little while, and the terrible one shall be brought low; the scouter, whose bitter mockery or insolent wit, has served to blind men's minds, or turn them from the truth, shall be consumed; and the sophist who has, by a curious skill, intertwined, till he has seemed to change the truth into, a cold and insensible scepticism, and the man who has come forth with mystic spell and gloomy incantation, to cheat man of his noblest privileges, and change man's loftiest aspirations, shall, with his polluted and hateful rites, sink into oblivion; and if there be any other shapes under

which the destroyers and oppressors of mankind have come forth, that shape is doomed to fall beneath the stroke of those weapons, which are "mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds."

With the reign of Christianity, the cruelty of tyranny, the anarchy of scepticism, and the slavery of superstition, are alike incompatible. By a certain and unalterable law, as she increases in influence, they must decrease; as her power spreads, theirs must fall. In that "fire," which she kindles, the rod of the oppressor, and the wand of the magician, and the veil of the deceiver, and the warrior's mail, and all the other ensigns of despotism and crime, shall be burnt up for ever. She has come to "give light to them that sit in darkness;" she has come to "break every yoke," to "undo the heavy burdens," to "bid the oppressed go free." She has come to proclaim and to promote the reign of universal peace. She has come to prove herself the mother of all goodness, the promoter of all happiness, the patroness of all excellence, the source of purity, security, and joy to mankind. With this commission, to wage war with the deepest wickedness of our world, it would be chimerical to expect that Christianity should not meet with the constant and fierce opposition of the powers of darkness. Whatever they can do to extinguish her light, or prevent its wide diffusion, we may rest assured will be done, and that with an energy and perseverance which the utmost efforts of patient endurance, confident faith, and invincible fidelity on the part of the emissaries of the cross, will be required to meet.

Every advance Christianity makes in our world, must be connected with conflict. Not a single bosom is surrendered to her occupancy without a struggle; and as she advances to wrest the whole world from the prince of darkness, is it to be supposed that he will fail to meet her at every point, and contend with her every inch of territory? It were vain and idle to indulge such an expectation. Rather, brethren, let us be prepared to find our difficulties increased, as our cause advances. The further our victorious standard penetrates into the enemy's country, the more fierce and desperate will be his resistance. The shorter the tenure of his occupation is, the greater will the determination be, with which he will descend into the field of conflict. But the issue of that conflict is not doubtful; for already is it written in the prophetic annals of the Church—"The brethren shall overcome their enemy by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word

of their testimony, for they count not their lives dear unto them."

II. I have now to direct your attention for a little to our Lord's expression of ardent desire for the commencement of that work, which He thus came into this world to accomplish: "I am come to send fire on the earth: I would that it were already kindled!"

If you examine the chronology of the Gospel history, you will find, that the discourses of which my text forms a part, were delivered by our Lord within a very short time—three or four weeks, at the very utmost, of His crucifixion. As He uttered these words, then, He had His sufferings full in view, and was in the immediate prospect of entering upon those scenes of unparalleled agony, through which He passed to the accomplishment of His work. With the feelings that then occupied His bosom, these words are in full harmony. As He approached the crisis of His earthly history, we learn from the narrative of the evangelist, that His mind was much occupied with the awful thoughts the prospect before Him was calculated to excite. His position was peculiar; and the work He had undertaken, was also of the most stupendous character. The well beloved of God, He was about to feel the stroke of Divine wrath, and expire amidst the horrors of the Divine displeasure. In unequal conflict, He was about to descend into the field against the combined and various forces of the prince of darkness. Not for the first time, had He and Satan met in fierce encounter. At the head of heaven's hosts, He had hurled him from his high estate, and frustrated all His designs. He was now about to meet his ancient foe under very different circumstances. No longer surrounded by attendant angels; no longer invested with celestial panoply, and glistening with celestial glory; no longer grasping in his hand the archangel's sword, or bearing on His arm the sevenfold shield of heaven; but alone, unarmed, arrayed in the garb of humanity, encircled with clouds of shame, partaker of a nature over which Satan had, again and again, triumphed, He was about to enter into the field with all the powers of darkness. And is it strange, that with this prospect before Him; is it to be wondered at, that feeling Himself thus singled out as the last champion of truth and goodness against the confederated enemies of God and man, anticipating the moment when He should have to stand, as it were, in the very Thermopylae of the universe, and sustain on His arm the rights of heaven and the destinies of earth, the shadows

of deep thought should have fallen across even His spirit, and that amidst the anxieties of the expected struggle "his soul was troubled?" But, brethren, amidst all the dark and depressing feelings which crowded into His mind in the prospect of His final struggle, mark you this, (and mark it with gratitude and joy,) that no emotion of regret ever passed across His spirit, that He had pledged Himself to such a cause, nor the faintest indications of a desire to be relieved from the enterprise on which He had embarked. On the contrary, the nearer His approach to the crisis and consummation of the whole, the more buoyant and ardent were His aspirations after its completion. It was a baptism of blood, by which He was to be prepared for His work; but He shrunk not from it; nay, He longed till it was accomplished. The fire He came to send forth, was to be kindled on that altar on which He was to be consumed as a sacrifice; but He refused not the scorching flames; His cry was, "I would that it were already kindled."

The considerations which thus induced our Saviour so ardently to desire the accomplishment of His work, are to be sought, doubtless, in the consequences that were to result from the accomplishment of that work; and though these can never be present to our minds with the force that occupied His, yet it may be permitted to us without presumption to institute an inquiry into these considerations, and the effect it may be supposed they would have in causing Him thus to long for their realization. Allow me, then, to refer to a few of the consequences of the kindling of that fire, the Saviour came to send upon the earth.

And first, the diffusion of Christianity stands closely connected with the promotion of the Divine glory in the world. In consequence of the prevalence of sin, the glory of God, as manifested in this portion of His universe, has been fearfully obscured. Though "all His works praise Him, in all places of His dominions," man, the greatest and the best of His works here, has rebelled against His authority, and sought to do dishonour to his Creator. By some of our race, the very existence of Deity is firmly and broadly denied; and this very earth, so replete with indications of wisdom and goodness, has been pronounced the desolate creature of chance; and the powers of intelligence with which God has endowed man, have been tasked to the very utmost, to explain away all evidence at once of the existence of that Being by whom they have been given, and of the real and essential superiority of him who has received them to the beasts that

perish. By others, the spirituality and unity of the Deity have been denied, or forgotten. "They have changed the glory of God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things." They have given their worship to stocks and stones, the work of their own hands; and having thus perverted the proper object of worship, their very religion has become a crime, their lustrations have but deepened their impurity, and their worship proved solemn insult to the Supreme Being. By others, the existence and attributes of Deity are admitted, but it is merely as it were out of courtesy—no practical effect follows from the admission. The bounty of God is thus not acknowledged by them in their prosperity; the justice of God is not marked by them in their adversity; the promises of God are not their stay; the purity of God is not their dread; and if they worship God at all, their worship really amounts to nothing more than the sort of formal homage which the feudal inferior pays to the individual, whom a factitious arrangement has placed above him, from whom he has nothing to receive, and to whom he has nothing to render. And among these three classes, in their various subdivisions, all mankind must naturally be classed,—dishonouring the God that made them, and living "without God in His own world." Now the fire which Christ came to kindle, is one before which this state of things cannot abide. Wherever the Gospel spreads, it brings back God His proper authority in the hearts and affections of men. It unfolds to us the true character of God, as a God of infinite purity, who cannot look upon sin but with detestation and abhorrence, at the same time soothing and sustaining, and winning us by the melting influences of His love. In announcing to us the removal of all obstacles to a perfect reconciliation, and pressing upon us the urgent invitations of God to come and accept His grace, it clears up a whole world of doubt and suspicion, and prejudice and anxiety, and bids us look with unjaundiced eye on the unsullied beauty and perfect glory of the Divine character and government. As these doctrines sink into the mind, and as through the agency of the Divine Spirit they claim for themselves a place of occupancy and supremacy within the breasts that enclose them, the idolater, rising from his polluted altar, and the suppliant worshipping, feeling the power of an earnest conviction of the Deity laying hold of his spirit, fall down, as by a common impulse, in deep spiritual worship, before the footstool of the living and

true God. Thus does Christianity vindicate for its Divine Author the homage that is His due, and restore to God the fear and love of the creatures He has formed. On such a work, it is impossible for any mind with any right feeling of God, to look without deep interest and ardent anticipation. Who that knows and fears God, but mourns over the dishonour done to Him in the world? Who that desires the Divine glory, but must exult in the prospect the progress of Christianity affords, of the time when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory? And if such feelings can occupy and fill our bosoms, oh! what must have been the emotions arising from this source, to Him who was Himself the "brightness of His Father's glory," whose all-absorbing aim was to glorify God on the earth, and whose prayer in regard to the result of His own obedience was, "Father, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee!"

Secondly, in the diffusion of Christianity, our Lord traced the fulfilment of His own gracious purpose to men, and the success of His own work in their behalf; and this prospect naturally prompted the desire expressed in the words before us. When our Lord became incarnate, and entered on the work of His humiliation, it was in order that by means of that work He might bring to pass the design and purpose which had eternally occupied the Infinite mind. This design was in favour of the sons of men; the purpose was a purpose of grace; but neither could the design be fulfilled, nor the purpose take effect, save upon the condition, that the work which Christ had undertaken should be proved sufficient for the salvation of the guilty. Here there was a mighty experiment begun,—an experiment, on which hung suspended the issues of eternity. Is it to succeed, or is it to fail? On these grounds, we may rest well assured, there was no doubt in the mind of the Redeemer; He knew all the consequences of what He had undertaken, and looked forward to His work with a perfect knowledge of all He had to do, and of all the blessed consequences which should follow from His obedience. He knew He should establish on a basis of everlasting strength, the Divine purpose of grace to man; He knew, that by the channel He was about to open, the bounty of Heaven would flow in a free and plenteous stream; He knew that the Father had given Him a people, and that "all that the Father had given Him should come to Him." He anticipated the time, when "the heathen should be His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth His posses-

sion." He saw in long procession the advancing myriads of the redeemed, coming up to Zion with song, and everlasting joy on their heads. He beheld Satan's empire crushed, his sceptre broken, his authority destroyed. He anticipated the joy of the angels, as they witnessed sinner after sinner converted unto God. He foretasted—a foretaste peculiar to Himself—the joy of bringing many sons unto glory. And as all these prospects in bright manifestation and in firm assurance pressed on His view, who can wonder that His bosom should have thrilled with ardent desire, and His cry should have been with regard to that fire, by which these results were to be secured—"I would that it were already kindled!"

Thirdly, our Lord saw in the extension of Christianity, a vast increase to the purity and moral goodness of the world; and this filled His mind with delight and intense desire, that the work were already begun. To a mind possessing any degree of intellectual vigour, and not altogether destitute of right moral feeling, the state of a thinking, accountable, and immortal being like man, lying under the polluting, degrading, destroying power of sin, cannot fail to raise emotions of the deepest pain. That man should have an eye in him with which he might see God; that he should have a mind in him endowed with powers sufficient to raise him to the enjoyment of fellowship with Deity; that he should have a heart capable of being instinct with the holiest emotions, and fraught with the purest and noblest aspirations; that he should have within him the elements of immortality, and that his destiny should be to a never-ending existence; and that thus he should be content to grovel in the dust among all its defilement, hunt after shadows, defile himself with sin, feed on husks, clothe himself with rags, and form for himself society with lost spirits in eternity; this is a state so strange, so appalling, so horrible, that no mind with any regard for goodness can contemplate it without amazement and sorrow. And yet, such is the human race. The Scripture hath concluded "all under sin." "The world lieth in the wicked one"—"there is none righteous, no, not one." The depravity is universal, and reaps its deadly harvest in every quarter of the globe. All classes of men are alike, in savage and civilised life. The simplicity and innocence of the former is the idle dream of the poet; the Eutopian refinement of the latter, is the unrealised figment of philosophy. If, in the one, we see man's wickedness starting forth in its naked deformity, in the other we see

it but hiding itself under the hypocrisy of the comely mask of a well-fitting garment. In both cases, wickedness is there, marking and degrading the being of man. On this state of things, with what feelings must He have looked, whose eye could take in the whole melancholy scene, and whose mind could fully estimate its full amount of evil! If the sight of a city wholly given to idolatry, caused the soul of an apostle to start within him; if the prevailing iniquity and ungodliness of his nation made a prophet exclaim—"Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people;" what must have been the feelings with which He, who was Himself incarnate holiness, must have looked upon a whole world devoted to idolatry, and "sold under sin!" And knowing that in that purifying fire He had come to send on the earth, was to be found the only real and effectual remedy for this sad state of things, who can wonder that His sacred bosom should have expanded with an ardent desire which gave itself vent in the exclamation—"I would that it were already kindled!"

Fourthly, the bearing of His religion on the happiness of mankind must also have actuated the Saviour in desiring its speedy and steady diffusion. When we cast our eye over the condition of our race, we behold man universally engaged in the eager pursuit of happiness, often baffled in the pursuit, and constrained in disappointment of spirit to exclaim—"Who will show us any good?" No situation in life is exempt from sorrow, no occupation removed from anxiety, no pleasure satisfying his desires. On every pursuit, and on every inheritance of man, there is written—"Vanity and vexation of spirit." And when, in addition to the ordinary evils that afflict humanity, there are those which spring from criminal indulgence, idolatrous delusion, or tyrannical oppression, the people may be truly said to "sit in darkness and dwell in the region of the shadow of death." Agitated with passions which they have never learned to curb, harrassed by fears for which superstition has no charm, and involved in the incessant conflict with the pride, or cruelty, or covetousness of each other, the language of Scripture may well be applied to them—"They eat themselves and curse their king and their God and look upward; and they look unto the earth, and behold, trouble and darkness, and distress of anguish." Melancholy spectacles! sad and sorrowful condition! Oh! how, how may it be remedied? Brethren, mankind have not been engaged for 6,000 years in this in-

cessant search after happiness, without many answers being given to this question, and many specifics being suggested for the securing of this object. All these answers have proved erroneous, all these specifics have turned out utter failures. And had not God been pleased to come forth and administer to man's wants, the world had still rested under the gloom of impenetrable darkness, and all the misery of a fruitless search after happiness.

But, in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, there is a panacea for man's ills, and an antidote for man's sorrows. Wherever it spreads, the people that "sat in darkness, see a great light," and upon them that dwell in the region of the shadow of death, a light shines. Wherever it is embraced, there enters the bosom a "joy which is as the joy of harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil." Christianity finds the earth dreary and barren; and wherever her footsteps are seen, flowers begin to spring up and fruits to grow. "The wilderness and the solitary place is made glad, and the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose," because of her. Christianity finds the earth the abode of savage passions and cruel lusts, which set man against his fellow, and fill the world with carnage and with woe. She extracts the poison from the asp, changes the wolf into the lamb, and causes "the leopard to lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion, and the fating together," and banishes destruction from the land. Christianity finds man faint with want, pain, grief, and spreads for the famishing "a feast of fat things, full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." She heals all his sickness; she gives "power to the faint, and to them that have no might; she increaseth strength." She "opens the eyes of the blind, unstops the ears of the deaf, causes the lame to leap for joy, and the tongue of the dumb to sing." Christianity finds man like "the troubled sea, which cannot rest," and she stands up like her great Master, and says to him, "Peace, be still;" and on the glassy surface of the once troubled scene, there rest the sunshine and peace of heaven. On such a prospect, with what emotions of delight would He have gazed, who was full of compassion to the children of men; and who for the joy of bringing many to glory, "endured the cross, and despised the shame!"

Lastly, the force of these considerations is greatly enhanced by the fact, that the triumphs of Christianity are progressive, and that her conquests are perpetual. Whatever of glory thereby redounds to

God, whatever honour and gratification thence accrues to the Saviour, and whatever the purity and happiness—whatever the accession of well-being to our race, they are all but, so many steps in a progression which is to spread through the measureless vastness of eternity. At no period of its history, at no stage of its progress can any power say to the kingdom of the Messiah—"Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." It never reaches its culminating point, from which it must begin to decline. Its law is incessant progress; its destiny is necessary increase; its course is from conquering to conquer. No triumphs yet achieved, no gains yet made can be assumed as the limit of its power. In its career of beneficence and glory, the goal of to-day is to become the starting point of to-morrow; and the centre of the circle which is to encircle the accessions of the future, must be sought in the circumference of that which bounds the achievements of the past. In the oath of the everlasting covenant it is sworn, "All nations shall be blessed in Christ, and all nations shall call Him blessed."

Nor shall this continual extension of territory in any degree endanger the stability of the kingdom itself. With many earthly empires the shouts of their victorious arms have passed into the knell of their approaching doom. Rome fell through the vastness of her dominions, and the very multitude of her conquests. Spain fell from her proud pre-eminence among the nations of Europe, from the time that her chivalry gained for her new empires on the other side of the Atlantic. And Britain, invincible within her own sea-bound shores, has ere now found the same defeat in consequence of the wide extent of her foreign possessions. But no such contingencies threaten the empire of Christ. However vast, or however far it spreads, the eye of Omnipotence watches over it, and the arm of Omnipotence secures its safety. It is emphatically and absolutely "an everlasting kingdom." All things else with which man has to do are destined to decay. Generations live to die; empires rise to fall; the solid globe itself is exposed to decay; mountains are wearing away; continents are waxing old; oceans have forsaken their places; the planetary system moves slowly but surely to its ruin; the sun himself shall grow dim with age; the stellar universe is preparing for its own annihilation; all things, the great as well as the small, carry within their bosoms the elements of dissolution; and sooner or later the time will come when they shall all be numbered among the things that are past and gone. But to the reign of Christ there shall be no end—"of

the increase of His government and of His peace there will be no end." Protected and moved by Him who is "the blessed and only Potentate," by Him who "alone hath immortality," by Him who "inhabits eternity," it shall retain its place, though all things else decay and perish. Amidst the ruins of earthly kingdoms, amidst the dissolution of the terrestrial system, amidst the wild crash of worlds, it shall remain unshaken and unharmed; "the Lord thy God, the Lord thy lawgiver, the Lord thy judge, He will save thee!" How glorious the prospect thus expanded before us! What a gush of exhilarating and triumphant emotion is it calculated to excite in every renewed and holy mind! With what feelings of unutterable delight must it have been associated in the mind of the Redeemer, who could view it in all its vastness, and appreciate it in all its glory! And with what earnestness must He have entertained the desire, that the fire by whose sacred flame all this was to be effected, were already kindled!

Honoured fathers, and beloved Christian brethren and friends, I have done with this discourse, excepting for a single moment to beseech you to sympathise with our exalted Lord in this deep and hallowed desire. Let us share His zeal for God, His love for goodness, His deep compassion for the helpless and the lost. Let us look abroad on this world, which still lies under the power of Satan, amidst the deep shades of the land of death; let us have faith in the purifying, the sanctifying, the elevating power of Christianity; and let the earnest prayer of our hearts, and the supreme effort of our lives be, that this fire which has been already kindled, may widely and speedily spread, until the whole world has been encircled in its flames, and out of the scene of confusion may emerge a second paradise; in the universal prevalence of purity and love.

Oh, my hearers, let us see to it that the fire burns in our own bosoms, and that there is carrying forward its salutary work. God forbid that we who are seeking the spread of the Gospel throughout the world, should either be destitute of its power, or but slightly influenced by its spirit. Let it never be cast back upon us by the enemy, that we who profess to be at war with all vice, error, delusion, impurity, and evil, are ourselves the slaves of any unworthy practice, of any polluted error, of any sensual passion, of any low and worldly desire. Let us yield up all that is base and sensual and devilish in our fleshly nature, to the consuming flame of that fire, which Christ hath sent on the

earth; and to show that we have passed through the fire and left our dross behind us, let us stand forth to illustrate personally the purifying effects of that Gospel we have embraced.

The times in which we live, demand that we should be men of earnestness, energy, and perseverance. These, sirs, are not times for the mere idleness of religious profession, for the mere refinements and enjoyments of Christian association. We have fallen upon times when if a man be not as if he had a fire burning within him, he had better keep behind the scenes, and not adventure himself on the crowded stage and theatre of active life. All men now are questioned whence they come, and what they are, and what they have in them, and whether they be tending, and woe to that man who cannot abide the scrutiny of our age. More especially, woe to that man who calls himself a traveller from hence, and would speak to his fellows about eternity, or would work some spiritual deliverance on the earth, if he be not firm, ardent, sincere, and determined in the work to which he has put his hand. This busy world, deafened by the hum of toil, or charmed by its syren songs, will have none of him. And the Church, encompassed with many foes, and a hard battle to fight, will have none of him. It is men of pith and courage and fire that this age demands; and such, my Christian brethren, let us seek to be. Oh! to be worthy of the place which Providence has assigned to us, and of the work to which Providence has called us, and of the times in which Providence has cast our lot! Oh! to be under the active and all-subduing power of that fire which Christ has already kindled! Oh! to be imbued and penetrated by His Spirit, that like Him we may count it our meat and drink, our very existence, the great end of our being, to do the will of our Father who is in heaven!

And now may He, with whom is the dispensation of the Spirit, baptise every one of you with the Holy Ghost and with fire! And may the blessing of the great Head of the Church rest upon this honoured and blessed Chapel, upon all its officers and all its agents, upon all its supporters and upon all its benefactors. And may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever." Amen.

THE HOPE OF A FALLEN WORLD.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, M.A.

PREACHED AT CHRIST CHURCH, NEWGATE STREET, ON WEDNESDAY EVENING,
MAY 7, 1845.

The Annual Sermon for the Newfoundland and British North America School Society.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."—Romans viii. 19—22.

We are told, that in those countries where the night lasts for many months successively, the inhabitants have a custom, when they conclude that the day-spring is at hand, to climb the loftiest mountains, taking with them instruments of music, and on the mountain tops they wait and watch with eager eye the first streak of returning day. That first streak is the signal for a burst of gladness and melody, and they welcome the day-spring with acclamations and songs of triumph. Such was the attitude of those who "waited for the consolation of Israel," before the Son of God was "manifested in the flesh." They were then with earnest eye looking for the coming of Him that should redeem them. And such ought to be the attitude of soul maintained by those, who look for Christ's second coming "without sin unto salvation." Such was the attitude of the spirits of the faithful in apostolic times; and such, thank God, is increasingly the attitude of the spirits of the faithful in these later days. The hope of the Christian is not death, but life; not dissolution, but renovation; not to be "unclothed, but to be clothed upon with his house, which is from heaven."

Our scriptural Church teaches her faithful children, over the grave where the righteous are laid, thus to pray:—"That it may please Thee, O God, shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect, and to hasten Thy kingdom; that we, with all those that are departed this life in the true faith of Thy holy name, may have perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and

everlasting glory." This bright hope of the children of God is shared in by the very world that they inhabit; creation herself sympathizes with them, and looks forward with longing expectation to the consummation of the saints.

It was for the purpose of enhancing the conception which believers should cherish, of the "glory that shall be revealed," that the apostle introduces the mysterious and magnificent passage that you have just heard. He is speaking of the hope of the righteous as weighed against their sorrows; and he thus writes: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." For how great (as if he had said) is that glory!—"for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

In these times of rebuke and blasphemy and confusion, when "the foundations are out of course," "what can the righteous do?" When the present is perturbing, and the immediate future brooding and gloomy, it is indeed a time for the true servants and soldiers of Christ's cross to be looking above, and looking beyond, and deriving their strength and drawing their consolation from other than earthly sources. And, therefore, beloved bre-

thron, the subject before us is one every way reasonable, as it is sublime.

It is not our purpose and intention to enter into any doubtful speculations, as to the personal advent and reign of Christ, pre-millennial, or post-millennial; it is not our purpose to enter into discussions with regard to the precise period or time when the great event, which prophecy foreshadows, shall be accomplished; but it is simply our purpose to endeavour to unfold to you this deep and blessed passage, with a view to the tendency that it has, to animate our hopes, to quicken our labours, and to sustain and strengthen us in this and every "work of faith" to which our heavenly Master calls us, in order that we may set forth His glory, and set forward the salvation of our fellow-sinners, and be "fellow-workers with God," to hasten on the blessed events, and the wondrous triumphs, which await the Church of the Redeemer and the Redeemer himself.

We shall, on the one hand, turn your attention to the mournful condition of creation since the fall; and we shall then turn your attention, on the other hand, to the glorious hope which animates creation in her fallen state.

May the good Spirit of God attend us; that in simplicity, and soberness, and faith, we may understand and receive the truth of His holy Word.

I. The mournful condition of creation since the fall. We say, of "creation;" and you will perceive at once that we take this to be the fitter word to convey the meaning of the *אֶרֶץ* in the original. The translators of our Bible, indeed, seem to have felt this, because the word which they render in the nineteenth verse and in the twenty-first verse by the word "creature," they, in the twenty-second verse, render by the word "creation." There seems to be no ground for this change of word; and if the word be rendered "creation" in the last instance, it ought equally to be rendered "creation" in the former instances. Taking, then, the word in its most obvious meaning, and taking it as our translators themselves, in this very passage, have once rendered it, we abide by this as the true translation, "the creation." The mournful condition of the creation; by which we understand, with amplitude of signification, the visible and material heavens and

earth which God made for an habitation for mankind, together with, to a certain extent, the brute creation, which have not man's reason, and therefore could not have man's responsibility. Now this "whole creation" is said to be in the "bondage of corruption;" it is said to be "made subject" to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same; it is said to "travail and groan in pain together until now." Such is the outline of its mournful condition.

It is in the "bondage of corruption;" enslaved, debased, burdened, enthralled through the iniquity and the abominable depravity of its inhabitant man. The mansion has been spotted and stained by the leprosy of him that dwells in it. It could not be otherwise; such is the canker, and such the defilement of sin, that whatever it touches it pollutes; and whatever it has to do with, it decays and it corrupts. Before man fell, the whole creation, as it came from God, was declared by its Maker, to be "very good;" and in the heavens above, and the earth beneath, and the mighty sea around, there was no spot or stain of pollution; all was purity, even as man was pure. The eye of the Infinite saw no fault, no blemish in His own magnificent structure; everything answered its purpose, everything served and glorified God. The whole heaven and earth were as a mirror without a stain and without the least dimness, on the surface of which was reflected the glory of God. The heavens then fully and perfectly "declared His glory," and "the firmament showed His handiwork," and the earth adored Him, and the sea lifted up her voice in His praise; and all the creatures, unintelligent though they were, yet rendered their irrational, but fervent adoration to the great God of all. But when man became corrupt, creation became corrupted through his corruption; and man turned the good creatures of God into occasions of sin, and into means of sensuality, and brutal excess, and dark idolatry. The whole creation, in a sort and a sense, became partaker of the defilement of its rational inhabitants; and man forced the pure world into the service of Satan and sin. And the sun that was intended but to point the soul to God, became itself the god of the soul, hiding the great God who made it, and caused it to go forth as a giant to run its race, or as a bridegroom

out of his chamber; and the moon and the stars that told of God's handiworks, became objects of dark adoration and worship; and guilty, fallen man polluted and perverted them to hide God, whom they were intended to reveal. And so man turned the brute beasts—the ox that eateth straw, and the calf that eateth hay, and the creeping thing, and the reptile, and the fish of the sea, and the flocks and the herds, into objects of idolatry; or if they were not converted into objects of adoration, they were sacrificed and slain to devils. And the whole earth became burdened, and blackened, and blighted, by the corruption and depravity of its wretched inhabitants, to whom it was intended to be a temple of the living God; it became a temple of lust, and sensuality, and abomination. And the very creatures, that were made for man's good and his enjoyment, became snares to his senses, and entanglements to his soul; and the bread and the wine, to “make glad his heart,” and the “oil to give him a pleasant countenance” were turned into ministers of depravity, and made to supply the means of indulgence of his gross appetites, which lorded it over his rational mind, and which made him the slave of Satan. Thus drunkenness and excess, and debauchery and impurity, have been made to find their fuel and their food, in the good things that God had made for man's good and for His own glory. Thus the world is brought into the “bondage of corruption;” it is enslaved, it is depraved, it is dishonoured by guilty man.

And, being thus enthralled by corruption, it is made “subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected it in hope.” It is a marvellous, but a common peculiarity in the government of the great God, who governs His creatures in sympathy and in union, that things should partake in each other's weal, or in each other's woe. He “visits the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation,” as “He sheweth mercy to thousands in them that love Him, and keep His commandments.” It tends to manifest, on the one hand, His hatred and abhorrence of iniquity; and it tends, on the other hand, to manifest and magnify His delight in holiness, and in those that are holy. And God has been pleased to order that there should be this sympathetic feeling in suffering or affliction,

existing not merely between intelligent creatures, but between intelligent creatures and unintelligent creation, inasmuch as God oftentimes makes the land, and makes the brute creation to suffer, in consequence of the sins of those with whom they have to do. As the psalmist expresses it, “A fruitful land maketh He barren, because of the wickedness of them that dwell therein.” And if we want illustration of how He does this, and of how frequently it has been done, we need but direct your minds back to the fair plain of Jordan, over which, when Lot cast his covetous eye, he saw it well watered; as the garden of the Lord; and we need but direct your eye now on that same plain of Jordan, and bid you stand on some eminence, and overlook this once fair and fertile landscape, and what do you now see but a waste, arid, parched wilderness, where travellers tell us not a shrub grows, and scarce a sign of life can be traced, and it stretches around a dark, sluggish lake of waters, that smells of brimstone, and tells of judgment? And why is all this? Because of the wickedness of those who dwell on the plain of Jordan. The judgment on the sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah fell on the very land that they had polluted through their corruption; and the plain of Jordan suffered and sorrowed, with its guilty and its consumed inhabitants. Or, again, we need but bid you look back at another time, upon the land of Zion, that land which God apied out as an heritage for His chosen, the glory of all lands, “flowing with milk and honey,” whose hills waved with the cedar, and whose valleys blushed with the vine; where the herds and the flocks were heard lowing and bleating on every hand. And what is it now? A rocky and arid sand, with here and there a bright patch of verdure and fertility, but to tell what once it was, and to show how fearfully it is transformed. And wherefore? Because of the guilt of its inhabitants. Zion has put on her widow's weeds, and mourns with her outcast and desolate children. But we are told that she shall again “blossom like the rose,” and again her beauty shall be as Lebanon, when the captivity of her children is turned again. And what God has thus, in a smaller measure, done in individual instances, He has, on the grand scale of universal visible creation, done in regard to the fall of man. “The crea-

tion was made subject to vanity; not willingly," for it had not sinned, but unwillingly it is made to suffer with the sinner, to partake with its inhabitants in the judgments that came upon him, "by reason of Him that subjected the same." God brought vanity on His beautiful works, and marred, though He did not wholly deface the lovely structure He had built and furnished. "Vanity" came upon it; change, decay, desolation, death. Fruitful tracts became barren deserts, the volcano heaved with its desolating floods, the earthquake rent the bowels of the solid globe asunder; endless instability and endless vicissitude characterized the whole face of creation. Nothing stable, nothing settled, nothing solid; all is continually dying and rising again, but nothing "continuing in one stay." "The whole creation is made subject to vanity," and, on every hand, we see symptoms of decrepitude, we see the premonitions of death, we hear the groanings of the brute creation, the whole "made subject to vanity." Oh! what a change in that beautiful world, over which its Creator looked, and beheld that it was "very good!" Who can tell what was the beautiful state of this earth, ere sin entered in, to mar, and to destroy? Who can tell? Still there is so much that is bright in the noon-day sun, and lovely in the dark and silent night, rich in the varied landscape, sweet in spring, bright and glorious in autumn's plenteousness, that we sometimes are ready to forget, what a change has come over creation, and are tempted to say, 'Only man is fallen.' But, alas, these are but transient signs; and again there comes sad and sorrowful evidence, that the creation is "made subject to vanity." "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Creation itself never "continueth in one stay."

To complete the picture of creation's mournful state, "we know that the whole creation travaileth and groaneth in pain together until now." What a grandeur there is in this personification of the whole visible universe! But though it is grand, it is not extravagant; we are told in the book of Psalms, that "the earth shall rejoice before the Lord;" "the sea is called upon to "roar, with all the fulness thereof," the trees of the forest to "break forth into singing," and the waves of the sea to "clap their hands," when the approach of the great Deliverer is announced. And

if the royal psalmist thus made all nature animate and vocal—all nature to praise her Creator, and await her Deliverer's coming; it is still by a similar bold flight of imagination, that the apostle personifies all creation as wearied with the bondage of corruption, mourning and woeful through the continual vanity that harasses and wastes her; "travailing and groaning in pain," waiting for the wondrous transformation that is in store for her, and striving after it as a woman in her pangs, drawing near to her delivery, longeth for the hour when it shall be said—"a man is born into the world." And it is not mere fancy, that we may seem at times to hear, in the moaning of the tempest, in the roar of the storm, in the dashing of the billows, in the sounds and the sighings that we may often hear to from troubled, from tempest-tossed nature—it is not mere fancy to construe these into the "groaning and travailing of creation," after that great redemption and deliverance that the Redeemer hath in store for her.

Brethren, must we not be arrested with the lesson thus taught us? What a fearful and horrible thing is sin, that it casts its dark shadow over the whole universe of God! that it throws its fearful slime and poison over all that was made fair, and bright, and lovely; and it more or less pollutes and defaces and defiles all! What must be the abhorrence with which the Holy One regards that "accursed thing," that, for the sake of it, He should reduce the unsinning creation into the "bondage of corruption," and make His own fair workmanship "subject to vanity," pour contempt and confusion on the world that He had formed for Himself, and all because of that hatred of the sins of man!

Oh! when we make light of sin, and trifle with that abominable thing that God abhorreth, let us look around us, as well as look within us, and look beneath us; see what sin is, and what sin has done, that we may be humbled, and be confounded, and hide our faces in the dust, and cry out in broken-hearted repentance, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?"

II. But we turn, dear brethren, to the

bright and blessed reverse of the picture; and contemplate the hope that animates creation in her mournful and fallen state.

"The earnest expectation of the creation, waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." That is the great epoch, to which creation turns her anxious eye, anticipating her glorious deliverance, when "the manifestation of the sons of God" shall appear. For we are hid; "our life is now hid with Christ in God." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." The children of Zion are strangers in an evil world. "The world knoweth us not," saith the beloved disciple, "because it knew Him not." Though He hath chosen them as His children, though He hath justified them in His Son, though He hath renewed them by His Spirit, though He hath secretly adopted them into His family, though He hath made them heirs of Himself, and joint-heirs with His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, yet are they still in disguise; they are His hidden ones; the world knoweth them not, and they sometimes know not one another; and the same lot happens to them as to the ungodly. Sorrows and trials, sicknesses and death, are their portion here below; their bodies go to the grave, as the bodies of the ungodly; their spirits are indeed with "the spirits of the just made perfect," but still it appears as if one lot happened to all; and the same grave opens for them that fear God, and them that fear Him not. But it shall not be always so. A day of manifestation cometh—a day of public adoption in the presence of the whole intelligent universe, a day of adoption in the day of "the redemption of the body;" for so it follows in the verse immediately after the passage on which we dwell—"And not only they" (the creation,) thus travail and groan, "but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." The resurrection, therefore, of the people of God, when they shall stand forth known and acknowledged of all men; the day when He shall "make up His jewels," and show them forth before the whole of His intelligent creation; when He shall come "to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe;" when "the mortal shall have put on immortality, and the corruptible incorruption, and

death is swallowed up in victory;" when the body of our humiliation shall be "fashioned like to the body of His glorification, according to the mighty working, whereby He is able, even to subdue all things unto Himself;" when, invested with the similitude of their glorious Head, not only secretly, in their souls, but manifestly and visibly, in their glorified and renovated bodies, they shall stand forth, confessed of all to be the sons of the Lord God Almighty, those in whom He delighteth, for His beloved Son's sake, and on whom He hath poured the fulness of His glory:—then, in "the manifestation of the sons of God," creation shall find her glorious deliverance:—this is that bright epoch, that period foretold by the holy prophets since the world began, the time of the restitution of all things; when the Creator shall say, "Behold, I make all things new." This, therefore, is that period to which the whole creation directs its earnest, anxious look, and for the coming of which it "travaileth, and groaneth," and longeth, until now.

Brethren, behold the hope of the creature. It shall be "delivered out of the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God!" Who shall describe the full import of this marvellous expression? Who shall describe what is intended by being "brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God?" Brethren, it cannot be annihilation, as many have been accustomed, as we think ignorantly, and without warrant from Scripture, to suppose. Would it be deliverance to creation, to be annihilated? Would it be any compensation for its unwilling, involuntary suffering, to be entirely blotted out as though it had never been? Impossible! The very fact that creation has suffered with man, and sympathised with man, is in itself strong presumption that it shall triumph with man, and be exalted with redeemed man; that if it were made partaker of the fall, it shall be made partaker of the redemption; that if the destroyer availed to mar it, the Restorer shall avail to beautify it, and with a beauty infinitely beyond what it had been ere the destroyer had defaced it. In the whole history of the dealings of God, as far as we can trace back that history, there is no precedent for annihilation. God is the Maker, not the destroyer. Satan is the destroyer. There is not in the visible universe

at this moment, with all its fluctuations, and transformations, and desolations, one sand grain less than there was in the moment when it was finished, when the "morning stars sang over it, and the sons of God shouted for joy." There is not a grain less at this moment, than there was at that wondrous moment. There is no precedent, then, for annihilation, in creation. And where do we find in revelation any anticipation of annihilation? Would not Satan have wherein to glory, if the restoration were not co-extensive with the destruction? If the new creature did not deliver all God's workmanship "into the glorious liberty of the sons of God," would not Satan have wherein to boast? Would he not have prevailed, to a certain extent, to mar and to deface God's gracious workmanship? But, brethren, we, according to the promise of God by the prophet Isaiah, repeated by the apostle Peter in the last chapter of his second epistle, look for "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." And the parallel that St. Peter draws between the dissolution of the old earth by water, and the dissolution of the heavens and the earth that now are, by fire, bears out, I think, this reasoning most completely. For he tells us that "the heavens and the earth that were before the deluge, being overflowed with water, perished;" and that "the heavens and the earth which now are," shall likewise perish. But how did the old heavens and earth perish? Not that they were annihilated by the flood, but, as it were, altered and transformed, and, to a certain extent, purified and renovated. Such was the effect of the baptism of water, and such, though unspeakably and immeasurably more complete, and penetrating, and perfect, and transforming, will be the efficacy of the baptism by fire. For as complete shall be the purification of the earth and the heavens, that we are told that "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the things that are therein, shall be burnt up, and all these things shall be dissolved," as if to burn out from the very core, and from the very first elements of creation, the stain, and the canker of corruption, that it might be, by the purification of fire, completely reduced, as it were, to the first chaos; but, from the ashes of that funeral fire of the heavens and the earth, shall there evolve a hea-

ven and an earth, unspeakably and incomparably more glorious than that which at first the great Author of all things pronounced to be "very good;" inasmuch that the prophet declares that the former heavens and earth shall no more "come into mind," they shall be lost in the splendour and magnificence of the second heaven and earth.

Now, brethren, the whole visible creation of God is looking forward to and anticipating this blessed hope;—when, with its renewed and ransomed inhabitants, it shall undergo renovation, and shall receive perfection. Oh! the glory of the stupendous plan of redeeming grace! How complete will it be! How infinitely will its effects transcend the glory that was lost in the fall! Then there will be "a new heaven and a new earth;" and the creature shall shine forth in the consummation of redemption, unspeakably more majestic and wondrous than in the accomplishment of the first creation, fair and goodly as it was.

Men and brethren, the subject thus feebly and faintly unfolded, is fitted to sound an alarm in the ears and in the heart of every one of us, who is making earth his portion, and the things of time and sense his being, end, and aim. They that corrupt the creature, and defile themselves therewith, shall never know the creature's promised bliss. And why set your affections on these perishing forms and semblances of things?—for there is really nothing abiding, nothing substantial. "Man walketh in a vain show, and disquieteth himself in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them." "Vanity of vanities!—all is vanity." What a pitiful, poor thing, then, for a man to be grovelling and doting upon things, which "perish in the using," and which soon shall be burned up in the fire of the last day! Alas! for the man, who leaves all, when he leaves earth! Alas! for the man, who, in the fire of the great day, will see everything his heart ever treasured, consumed and gone!

Oh! brethren, is not God at this very time shaking and alarming the slumbering sons of men, and calling upon them with a voice that should melt the most hardened heart—"Prepare to meet thy God?" And when we see such signs and events coming to pass, ought we not

to "give diligence, that we may be found of Him in peace?" Ought we not to "gird up our loins, and be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought to the righteous at the revelation of Jesus Christ?"

For those that profess to be waiting for Christ's coming, this contemplation is fitted to impart to them adoring admiration, and exalted hope. What is before us? To what have we been born, or, rather, born again? Who shall forecast what we must shortly witness, shortly partake of, shortly have our part in the midst of? Who shall forecast it? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." Redemption in all its stupendous progress, how inconceivably grand! What, then, will it be in its consummation, when the end shall come, and the whole shall be finished for ever!

Oh! brethren, and these things are nigh at hand! The people of God should look through the telescope of revelation with the eye of faith, and they would see in some sort as God sees. And how does He see? "A thousand years are with Him as yesterday, and yesterday as a thousand years." If they see with His focus, (if we may venture with reverence so to speak,) time will be annihilated, and the promise of God will be at the door; with the judge before the door, they will live as under the impression of the coming of Christ at any hour, in any moment; they will be listening for the sound of His footsteps, that when He knocketh, they may open the door to Him immediately, and the language of their hearts may be, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen."

And may not the children of God comfort and animate themselves amidst the sorrows of the brute creation, the vanity that they track over the face of the earth on every hand, the sad confusions and convulsions that shake this poor, perturbed, tumultuous, chequered, changeable state of things—may they not take to themselves the rich and blessed consolation that the Scriptures of truth supply, when they are told that it shall not always be so? Corruption shall not always enslave; vanity shall not always wither and waste; Satan shall not always "run to and fro," scattering sin and

death. But the glorious Deliverer shall come, and the time is not far off, when He shall deliver the whole creation out of the "bondage of corruption" into the "glorious liberty of the children of God." At that glorious change, there shall be no more suffering, and death shall be no more, and sorrow shall be no more; no groan shall ever be heard, no tear shall ever be shed, no pang shall ever be felt; but all shall be harmony, and light, and life, and love and glory. God shall dwell in the midst of His people, and the "new heavens and the new earth," will be worthy of their renovated inhabitants, meet for the sons of God, and meet for the presence of the Lamb, in the midst of the throne.

Beloved brethren, and ought not such bright anticipations to strengthen us in "fighting the good fight of faith," to sustain us in watching and working, till our Master come?—not fearing with the fear of the unbelieving, not sorrowing as others without hope, not driven to our wits' end, as those that do not remember that—as in that wondrous vision of the prophet, which we had uttered this evening in our ears—the whirlwind, the earthquake, and the fire pass by, and usher in the "still small voice" of a present God, in His grace and in His peace. I say, they are not to fear and sorrow, as those that do not remember, and do not believe and know, that after the judgments that are coming to try Christendom, and desolate the earth, there shall be the blessed presence of Him who said of old, when His people knew Him not, and cried out in their ignorance and fear, as He walked on the waves of the Sea of Galilee—"It is I, be not afraid."

Brethren, in that simple, blessed, and useful work of love, to which we invite you this night to lend more of your hearts, more of your succour, and more of your generosity, we may be well animated to think, that we are "fellow workers with God," fellow helpers toward the great consummation,—*"preparing the way of the Lord,"* hastening, so far as human agency can do it, the consummation of bliss, both of the saints and of creation itself.

The Newfoundland and British North America School Society is not a stranger among you. It has for many years pursued its simple, unostentatious, but most

beneficial course; it has never deserted the principles on which it set out—that a Christian education must be an education in the knowledge of Christ, as taught in His simple, unadulterated, un-mutilated Word—that those who teach “His lambs” in that Word, should themselves be first taught of His Spirit, and should be “epistles of Christ, known and read of all men,” that they may be warranted in saying, therefore, to the lambs of the flock, “follow us, as we follow Christ.” And God has so enabled them to carry out these principles, and practically to maintain them, that, as I am assured, there has been scarcely a solitary instance, (if indeed one,) in all the many years of their operations, of a teacher selected by them, and sent out to our colonies, that has either betrayed unsoundness in doctrine, or inconsistency, glaring inconsistency, in Christian conduct. What a stamp of Divine approval! What an evidence of the labour of the Spirit of wisdom and truth! What a ground for appeal to those, who love the simple truth, and are zealous for its maintenance!

This institution has supplied to our oldest colony, Newfoundland, almost the entire of the Christian instruction that its young natives have received. One hundred and twenty schools, partly there, and partly in Canada, owe their origin to this Society; and still owe, to a great extent, their maintenance. In these Schools, the children of those that have been the children of our land, have been taught the faith of their forefathers; and but for these Schools in Newfoundland, at one time antichrist would have taken possession, almost, if not altogether, of that interesting island. At a time when our Church was almost wholly denuded of her ministers, when there was no chief shepherd or bishop to watch over the scattered flock, Rome was not idle; her emissaries were all abroad; and but for the faithful band of teachers furnished by this Society, who not only trained the lambs of the flock, but in the emergency of the case, gathered together for a time in the Churches the scattered sheep of Christ, and read among them the beautiful form of Service we are privileged to enjoy, and read to them some faithful and useful discourses—but for their timely interposition, humanly speaking, true Christianity would have been almost

swept from the island, and a paganised Christianity, in the shape of Romanism, would have overspread the whole. What a debt is due to this watchful handmaid of our Church!

And when a bishop to that Island was sent out by our Church, and, through God's blessing, rallied the Church there, and brought about a much happier, more united, and more efficient state of things, as a check to the encroachments of Rome, and gathered the Church of Christ which was “scattered up and down as sheep having no shepherd,” he bore (and now that he has left this diocese he still bears,) the most direct testimony to the services of the teachers of this Institution. Suffer me to give you his former testimony:—

“My firm conviction is (he writes,) that they (the teachers) will be, under God's blessing, the main seminaries of the Protestant faith in this desolate and benighted land, pervaded as the instruction they impart is by the spirit of scriptural truth and evangelical principle. At distant stations, which, from the paucity of clergymen hitherto employed in this colony, could enjoy but little ministerial care, the teachers of the Newfoundland School Society have held together the congregations of the Church of England, by acting gratuitously as readers of Divine service on every Sabbath, and by instructing them in their religious and moral duties, under the sanction of ecclesiastical authority.”

On his removal from Newfoundland, to preside over the diocese of Jamaica, the bishop writes:—

“It will give me inexpressible satisfaction to be instrumental to the extension of the agency of the Society beyond the Colonies to which it has hitherto been confined, and I shall joyfully welcome any of their teachers in this diocese. I hope that the period may soon arrive when the Society may assume a more general name and character, and be so supported by the British and Colonial public, as to become the principal Colonial School Society in connection with the Established Church.”

I will now give you the more recent testimony to the schools connected with this Society, by his successor, the present bishop of Newfoundland.

“I have made acquaintance (he says,) with most of the schoolmasters supported or assisted by your Society in Newfound-

land; and I have great pleasure in bearing testimony to their zealous and faithful discharge of the duties of their important office. They have many difficulties to contend with, and great allowance must be made in examining their schools. Nevertheless, on the whole, their exertions, and the blessing of God on their exertions, will justify very strong expressions of admiration and gratitude on my part; and there are some of them, who, I believe, with God's blessing, would be highly useful in the work of the ministry, having sufficient attainments, and zeal tempered by discretion and humility."

Not only so, but in accordance with such testimony, eighteen of the teachers at least (I rather believe that the number is greater than eighteen,) furnished by the Society, were, after due examination, deemed qualified and fitted by the bishops of Newfoundland and Montreal, to be ordained; and these eighteen devoted and simple-minded ministers of Christ were added to the insufficient, the fearfully insufficient staff of clerical ministration in these our colonial dependencies. And this was all due to the labours of this Society. Nor is there any telling to what extent this Society might become the nursery for the clerical order in the colonies, were more means placed at its disposal. It is now on the eve of taking a momentous step in advance—giving itself a name which shall denote its comprehension of our colonies in general—so that being styled the "Colonial Church School Society," or the "Colonial Church Education Society," it may fairly invite an extended and enlarged co-operation of the faithful throughout the land, for the purpose of furnishing a sound simple Christianity and an evangelical education, under the wing, and in connection with the order of our scriptural Church, to the multitudes of the rising generation of our own expatriated people, which are now strewn over almost one-fourth of the globe.

And, brethren, these have an especial claim on us. It is not for heathen we seek your sympathy, but for your own baptised brethren, "bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh," some of whom are related to you, perhaps, in the ties of blood, or known to you in the ties of acquaintance-ship and friendship; and their claim is

therefore especial and pre-eminent, and paramount to the claim of the heathen themselves. Yes, if we would regard the heathen's claim most effectually, we must render more particular attention to the claim of our colonists; for while the colonists caricature and libel "the truth as it is in Jesus," how can we anticipate that that truth should tell with mighty efficacy on heathen minds? Will they not turn round and say, "Physician, heal thyself?" Will they not bid us look to our own European population, and Christianise them and evangelise them, or ever we turn to the heathen? "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through us" and our colonists; and England's name has become, in many lands, identical with a scourge, and a pestilence, not with the blessings of the Gospel, because of the way in which her colonists have desolated and defiled and extirpated, instead of coming fraught with blessings of peace and life and truth and holiness, to benefit, and elevate and spiritualise the nations among whom they have settled. Brethren, this stigma must be wiped away, before God will signalise us as a missionary land, and a missionary Church. And if the Society take this step in advance, if it thus "lengthen its cords, and strengthen its stakes," that it may afford shelter to multitudes of young wanderers that are to be found in our colonies—will you not, Christian brethren, support and second it? Will you not enlarge your contributions? and if you have hitherto withheld your contributions, will you not now, according to your ability, impart them? *It is the only educational Church of England Society for our colonies.* Our Missionary Societies and Bible Societies are quite inadequate and incomplete, unless education go along with them; and, brethren, this therefore, is a department, as extensive as it is open and clear.

May God dispose you, cheerfully and largely, as you may be able, to give to the service of your Saviour on this occasion. Brethren, the time is short—"whatever our hand findeth to do, let us do it with our might," that when our Master come, we may not have bitterly to bewail that we have spent so much on ourselves, so much on the world, and that we have given so little to Him who gave us all, and gave His own heart's blood, that we might have eternal life.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. STEPHEN BRIDGE, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH, DENMARK HILL, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
JUNE 1, 1845.

"And when He was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."—Mark v. 18, 19.

If we examine the prophecies of the Old Testament, which have reference to the Messiah, the Sent of God, or consider the public acts recorded of Him in the histories of the New, we cannot fail to discover that the great purpose for which the Son of God was manifested was, "that He might destroy the works of the devil." Once that unhappy spirit sat upon a throne, beautiful in holiness and radiant with joy, where with his fellows, the elder sons of the heavenly family, his delight was to do the will, and chant the praise of God. But at length, he, together with an unknown multitude of associate rebels, having swerved from his allegiance to the blessed and only Potentate, was seen like lightning falling from the heavens, and was reserved in chains under darkness in the "Tophet prepared of old, the pile whereof is fire and much wood, which the breath of the Lord like a stream of brimstone doth kindle." From that moment he became the avowed antagonist of God; established an infernal empire, and made his throne the rallying point around which all the principles and powers of evil might combine. Stimulated by implacable hatred to God, no sooner did he find our world created, and a being planted on its surface reflecting the moral likeness of the Deity, than he sought to efface from him the image of Jehovah, and stamp "his own upon his face." And in this, alas! did he too well succeed; the heart of man became suffused with the awful spirit of revolt; and earth, withered by the curse, and darkened by the frown of the Almighty, became at once a province of the prince of darkness. For ages, the world seemed almost entirely his own; its various tribes were governed by his laws, acknowledged his authority, and did homage at his feet. Whosoever Satan looked, the expense was his own, the teeming population were his subjects, his inviolable rulers sat in quiet possession of their thrones. No heart was unoccupied; no spot unvisited; no power unemployed; the world resembled a captive, chained to the wheels of the spoiler, and moving along in gloomy procession to everlasting death. And when the fullness of time was come, that the incarnate One, assuming the championship of the world, and planting Himself full in the pathway of the destroyer, should determine whether earth should pass entirely into the hands of Satan, or be again recovered into the hands of God—the usurper seems to have advanced to an awful climax in his tyranny. Not content with the future misery of his victims, he must come to torment them before the time. Not satisfied with the ordinary modes of temptation, with inhabiting the souls of men, he must make their bodies a living sacrifice, and transform man, heretofore the glory of the creation, into an incarnate fiend. The text introduces to our notice one of these unhappy individuals. Long had he been by his fierceness and strength, by his horrible ories and self-inflicted tortures, the terror of all around. But when Jesus, the lover of souls, beheld, He pitied and He loved him; not only did He cure the body, but He sanctified the soul, formed in the man a reverence for God, and a submission to His will, so that the mouth which yesterday poured out hideous blasphemy, now sends forth the breath of prayer, and the heart which then raged with malignant fury, is now the abode of dispositions kind and holy. Thus marvellous is the change, when the child of the devil is made the child of God, and when a sinner is translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

We propose this evening to call your attention—First, to the man's request; and, secondly, to our Lord's answer.

I. Let us consider the man's request.

"When he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him."

Now to this request he might have been led by fear. Freed as he had just been from the bondage and slavery of such a tyrant, under whose iron yoke his body had been tortured, and his soul had bled, we cannot wonder that his mind should shrink at the thought of the devil's returning in the absence of our Lord, and making him more vile and miserable than ever. He might have heard of cases in which demons had retired for a while, and then returned in greater numbers, and with deeper wrath than before. He might have known some sad exemplification of our Lord's words—

'When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return to my place from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first.' We must not then be surprised, that limited as was his present knowledge, and tremblingly alive as was his mind to all the horrors of his past condition, that fear should still retain possession of his mind. Thus we often find, that the soul which has been rescued from the captivity of Satan, and brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, is frequently for a time unable to rejoice, but appears for a season to "receive the spirit of bondage again to fear;" and this is precisely what might be expected. Our feelings, after any unexpected deliverance or event, are such that we find it difficult to believe its reality. Go tell the mother who has heard again and again that her child has been shipwrecked on the deep, or murdered in some foreign land, that her son who was dead is live again, and that he who was lost is found; and though your message be confirmed by testimony, which no one else would discredit, yet she will be with difficulty, if at all, persuaded of its truth. Go announce to the captive in the dungeon, who has been appointed to die, that a free and full pardon has been granted, that he is again to be restored to the society of his fellows, and to the privileges of a citizen, and he will for a time be

found to disbelieve you. Thus was it with the venerable patriarch, who had so long been separated from the son of his old age, the child of his beloved Rachel. "They told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not." Thus was it with the disciples after the resurrection of their Master; we are told, they could not believe for joy. So the newly freed soul has such vivid impressions of its past misery, such a keen remembrance of its former bondage, and such vast conceptions of the glorious things at present bestowed, and of those to be given in future to the children of God, that it can scarcely apprehend that, for which it is apprehended of Christ Jesus. We believe that there are few really converted to God, who have not in some degree been the subjects of such fears. But instead of discomfiting, such fears may be the source of encouragement; instead of being evidence against, they are proofs for us.

Brethren, when so much is at stake, we should fear for those who do not sometimes fear for themselves. What! did the manslayer when fleeing before the avenger of blood to the city of refuge, feel a trembling anxiety for the security of his life, until he had crossed its threshold of safety; and can the Christian, encompassed by enemies, harassed by rising corruption, and beset with temptations, feel no concern about the safety of his undying spirit? We do not say, that he has any real ground for fear; no, the final safety of the believer is as secure as the throne of God, and his eternal life as indestructible as the being of God; yet we say from the nature of the case, that fear may be expected to arise in his mind. And it is well it should; we do not mean that slavish anxiety, which keeps the soul in bondage and utterly destroys its peace, but that which is made in the hand of God the safeguard of the soul, which keeps it from trifling with temptation and parleying with the enemy, which destroys all self-confidence, and leads it to the strong for strength; that fear of sin which the apostle sought to gender in the minds of the Hebrews when he wrote, "if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the ad-

versaries." And, lastly, that fear of backsliding, which he sought to provoke, when he wrote those awful words, "it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance, seeing that they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it;" and still, let us rejoice, for if we desire to be with Christ, He will never leave us nor forsake us. He will make us victorious over every temptation, triumphant over every enemy; and bring us where the sword shall be sheathed for ever and where there shall be no more conflict.

But again, love to Christ might also dictate this request. From devils he had received the most dreadful torments; they had made him a sharer in their wretchedness, and had brought hell to him on earth. By his fellow-men he had been regarded with horror; whilst some fled from him in dismay, others loaded him with fetters, and bound him in chains. But in the Saviour he had seen a condescension and pity that had charmed his heart; for, when there was none to take compassion on him, when none regarded him as a man, or considered him as a brother, when all passed by on the other side, Jesus came to him in mercy, redeemed him from a misery which no created power could mitigate, and raised him from the degradation of a demon to the glorious distinction of a child of God. Well, then, might the character of Jesus, marked as it was by wisdom, power, and goodness, appear to him altogether lovely. Well might he have such a sense of our Lord's kindness as to wish to be with Him to seize every opportunity of testifying his gratitude.

Christian brethren, what a picture is here of what was your past, and of what ought to be your present, condition! Whose voice was it, when you lay under sentence of condemnation, weltering in your sin and in your blood, dead in trespasses and sins, that said unto you "Live?" It was the voice of the Son of God. Whose eye was it, when you were descending rapidly the stream of time, careless of salvation and heedless of the future, that saw and pitied you? Was it

not the eye of the Son of God? And whose arm was it, when you were standing on the margin of that precipice, at whose foot roll the fiery waves of the lake of torment, that caught you as you were about to drop into its abyss, unpardoned and unsaved, and snatched you as a brand from the burning? It was the arm of Jesus. Yea, it was the impulse of His grace which first brought you to your right mind. It was not your own might, or your own power which freed you from the enemy; it was the Spirit of the Lord. But for Him, Satan had held you still in his giant grasp, a helpless, hopeless victim; but no sooner were you accursed by His mighty energy, than you burst asunder the adamantine bonds of sin, and the strong cords of iniquity, as though you had been bound with "the green withes" of Samson, or shackled with the spider's web. His Spirit first led you to the cross, where you obtained pardon for your sins, and peace with God; and the self-same Spirit will conduct you hereafter to His throne, where you shall have His constant presence, and His beaming smile. And shall not the presence of Christ be dear to you now, who have thus seen His love, and felt His grace? We know that the language of your hearts with respect to Him has been—"In Thy presence is the fulness of joy." We know, that when He has been with you in the public worship of His earthly courts, or in the private devotion of the closet, you have exclaimed as you retired from them with a lingering step—"A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand"—"I love the habitation of Thy house, the place where Thine honour dwelleth"—"Lord, it is good for me to be here." See then, that you avoid that iniquity which would separate betwixt you and your God, which would provoke Him to hide His face from you, and thus bring on those seasons of darkness, by which life is embittered, and death is made painful. And let those who are going heavily in the bitterness of their souls, mourning the absence of their Lord, and crying—"Oh! that I knew where I might find Him,"—let them go afresh to His cross, confessing their sin, seeking His face in earnest entreaty, and soon they shall again behold Him whom their souls love. And if, brethren, you truly desire to be with Him, and to follow Him "whithersoever He goeth," He will go with you into every scene of trial, to

heighten your joy, and to secure your deliverance; and when the time is come that you must go forth from the world by death's dark and dismal path, you shall not depart alone; He will take you by the hand, and guide you through it; nor will He leave you then, but will present you to the Father as the subjects of His kingdom, and the objects of His love. Yea, He will present your souls unblemished and complete, whilst His eternal presence will open to you all the mansions of rest, and all the fountains of joy.

II. But we must proceed to consider, in the second place, our Lord's answer—"Go home to thy friends, and show them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

We might have supposed, after the great salvation Jesus had wrought for him, He would not have been reluctant to grant him any favour, especially when the request was the dictate of gratitude. The devils asked His permission to enter into the herd of swine, and it was immediately granted. The Gadarenes "besought Him to depart out of their coasts," and He listened to their entreaty; though in so doing, He was leaving them to wander undisturbed in their own counsels and delusions, and to perish in their sin. But the request of this man could not be granted. Why was this? The reply showed the modesty of the Saviour's spirit. For, though He came from heaven to our world to accomplish the mightiest deed, which angels ever witnessed, or the universe has known; though He came to carry into effect that plan, which bears upon its front the impress of the power and love of God, whose device filled up the ages before time began, and the full development of whose glories will occupy the period when time shall be no longer; yet, "He took not on Him the nature of angels," but was invested with the garments of our common humanity; though He came to establish a kingdom, and had at His command the chariots of God, which "are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels," yet, He came in great humility, descending from "Lord of all," to be "servant of all." This feature of His character was conspicuous throughout His life. His heart was indeed, often broken by reproach: He "gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: He hid

not His face from shame and spitting." But public applause He never sought; the greater part of His life was spent in privacy, and when He appeared before the world in His public ministry, it "was without form or comeliness, or any beauty that men should desire Him." So far was Jesus removed from the desire of vain glory, that while in His crucifixion, He was put to "open shame," the brightest manifestation of His glory, when He was declared to be the Son of God with power, was displayed upon a solitary mountain, and before a chosen few. And so, when by His irresistible authority, He fulfilled the predictions, which aforetime fell from the lips of prophecy, which foretold, that at His bidding, the lame man should leap as an hart, the tongue of the dumb sing, and the dead be raised to life; yet, unlike the great ones of the earth, He did not gather around Him the trophies of His triumph, or display the living memorials of His power. Thus, when He called back the departed spirit of the ruler's daughter, He charged the parents that no man should know it; when again, with the compassion and the power of a God, He led forth the blind man of Bethsaida out of the town, and there poured the stream of light upon his darkened eye-ball, He sent him away to his house, saying, Go neither into the town, nor tell it to any in the town; whilst the text presents us with another splendid proof that our Lord "made Himself of no reputation," and affords another argument why, in forming our character for eternity, we should constantly consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, even to learn of Him, to be "meek and lowly of heart," and thus to find rest to our souls.

But the principal objects our Lord had in view in giving this reply, appear to have been to show His compassion for this man's friends, and to enforce the duty we owe to relatives. That selfishness which closes the hand that ought to relieve, and dims the eye which ought to pity, which engrosses the entire affection of some, and too much influences the hearts of all, had obtained no lodgment in His bosom; in Him the precept was personified—"rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Thus, when at Nain's gate, He met a widowed and a childless mother, following to its resting place, the body of her only

son; so sooner did He behold her sorrows, than He was moved with compassion, and stretching forth one hand, with it wiped away her tears, whilst with the other He restored her child to her embrace. So, when He stood by the grave of the departed Lazarus, and saw his weeping sisters, "Jesus wept." And *here*, again, we see Him working a miracle, not to swell the number of His attendants, but to send the man to "bless his household." Doubtless they had suffered much from the calamity to which he had been subjected; they had seen him distracted by a demoniac frenzy, but now they were to see him in possession of that holy peace which arises from Christ's dwelling in the heart by faith. Every look which his friends gave to his countenance, now so calm and cheerful, would remind them of his once wild and haggard aspect; his whole deportment too, so pure and peaceable, was such a perfect contrast to his once brutal fierceness, as could not but strike them with the might and mercy of his Deliverer; whilst the accounts that he gave of Christ's power and compassion, might win their affection to Him, and convince them, that notwithstanding the judgment in which his deliverance had issued, He delighted in mercy. And so, mercy to one member of a family should be an encouragement to all the rest. He does not say, when He has enlightened, sanctified, or blessed one, 'I have done enough for that house,' but it is His wish that all in it may repair to the fountain of His grace, "and take the water of life freely;" for this cause, the one has obtained mercy, that in him "first, Christ Jesus might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting." Christ wished this man to show his friends what had been done, ~~that they too might apply to His grace, and hope in His mercy.~~ And what He said to the man, when parting from him, He says to all who have been the subjects of His renewing grace—"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

And the great object, brethren, which every man truly converted to God, will keep perpetually in view is, the promotion of the Divine glory, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, in the salvation of those around him, who as

yet, "know not God, and obey not the Gospel" of His dear Son; to the attainment of this end, all the energies and excellencies of his new nature will be constantly employed. He will seek that his "light may so shine before men, that they seeing his good works, may glorify his Father who is in heaven," and will desire to show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into marvellous light. But if the ardent desires of his soul for the salvation of men are thus to widen and widen, until they embrace all the human family; if he is to seek to bring to Christ, the infidel and the sceptic, the scoffer and the careless, much more is he to seek those who are united to him by the ties of nature, or the laws of God. The wife of his bosom, the parent, the brother, or the child, reason as well as affection points out these as the first objects of our concern. Religion does not petrify the feelings, and make us to be so absorbed in seeking our own safety, as to be indifferent to the fate of those about us; the grace of God does not annihilate the sympathies, or snap the bonds of nature; no, it strengthens and refines those sympathies, deepens the channel in which the affections flow, and purifies and consecrates the stream. He that has drunk himself of the "living water" will never rest content, will never cease to strive, and never cease to pray, till all who are near and dear to him, come and drink freely at the same overflowing fountain. He that has known himself the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, will be anxious that they should be partakers of this grace also; he that has felt the infinite, priceless value of his own soul, will feel himself impelled by a mighty impulse to seek the conversion of his unbelieving relatives; this will bear him forward, as on the bosom of an impetuous torrent; this will raise him above every difficulty; this will enable him to triumph over every feeling of reluctance or timidity, and fix his aim alone on the benevolent and sacred end in view.

Consider, brethren, the responsibility of an immortal being, pass over the boundaries of earth and time, rise with it to the judgment-seat of Christ, follow it with eager gaze as it soars fledged with immortality, to the realms of light, or sinks bound with adamant, to the regions of despair; think of its capacity for happiness or torment, one which shall

never be impaired by the revolution of ages, but be as vigorous when myriads of years have passed away, as when it first passed the gates of the celestial city, or sunk in the billows of the lake of torment; and then think again—this immortal essence, this undying being, this vessel of wrath, or this vessel of mercy, is embodied in a father, a mother, a sister, or a wife, and you will not cease to warn every one of them, "night and day with tears." It must be so. What! would you venture your lives in seeking to snatch from the devouring flame, the dearest object of earthly affection or tenderest regard, or to rescue such an one from a watery grave? would you plunge headlong into the rapid torrent? and will you, can you stand idle and unmoved, while each moment they are exposed to a far more dreadful death? Go home, then, to thy friends, and tell them "how great things the Lord hath done for thee," and hath had compassion on thee. Say how He hath pardoned your sins, healed your wounded spirit, made your bosom buoyant with the hope of immortality, and given you the pledge of heaven. Constrain them to come to the same fountain, the same cross, and the same throne; say, "Oh! taste, and see that the Lord is gracious!" "Come with us, and we will do you good, for we are travelling to the land of which the Lord hath said that He will give it us." And rest not content until you hear them respond, "We will go with you, for the Lord is with you; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Go home and tell them, not with the bitterness of an enemy, nor with the pride of a Pharisee, but with the earnestness of a dying man, and the affection of a father, You are by sin exposed to the righteous wrath of God; the Gospel is addressed to you; "to you is the Word of this salvation sent;" except you repent, and believe, you must assuredly perish; stife not conviction; "quench not the Spirit;" "arise and call upon thy God." Return again and again to the important work, and never give up the effort till you have gained your brother, your father, your relative unto Christ; till you see them travelling the same road, members of the same family, heirs of the same heaven, and children of the same God.

We would ask, With whom do you desire to go? We know the reply of the Christian, "Lord, to whom should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." "We will never leave Thee, nor forsake Thee;" we will follow Thee, whithersoever Thou goest.

Beloved brethren, we would cheer you, and say, Go forward; go, and the Lord be with thee. Yes, He will be with thee in the furnace of affliction, in the path of trial, in the swellings of Jordan, in the terrors of judgment, and in the triumphs of eternity.

But are there not some, who, instead of entreating Jesus that they may go with Him, are saying of the world and of the flesh, We have loved these, and after them will we go? But, fellow-sinners, be persuaded it is the way of transgression, it is hard. Satan may now urge you by temptations soft and pleasing, but ere long he will assail with terrors the most agonizing, and will endeavour to seal your condemnation. "Turn ye; then, at my reproof; turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" However guilty, however abandoned, still there is forgiveness with God. Let not Satan persuade you that the ear of Christ is sealed against your prayers; that though He may save others, He will not save you; that though He may pity others, He will not pity you: "His arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear." Still the all-cleansing fountain stands open; still the promise glows upon the sacred page—that He will "save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him;" that "whosoever cometh unto Him, He will in no wise cast them out." Yes; blessed be His name, His pity for wretched sinners may be seen in His tears and in His blood. Would He weep for the sinner's danger, if He were indifferent about his fate? Would He urge his acceptance of His grace, if He had no desire for his salvation? Would He have died for the ungodly, if He had no solicitude to deliver them from the wrath to come? No. Then cast yourselves upon His mercy and compassion, and you shall find that He will have mercy upon you, and that He will abundantly pardon.

MAYNOOTH.

SPEECH OF THE REV. J. C. YORKE.

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH REFORMATION SOCIETY,

*Held in the Hambro's Square Rooms, on Tuesday, May 13, 1845,
Captain FRANK HANCOCK in the Chair.*

MR. CHURCHMAN, I have been requested to move—
That the doctrines of the Church of Rome, as upheld and embodied in her modern books of devotion, class books of instruction, recitals and rituals, be now what they were in the days of the Council of Trent—dishonourable to God, injurious to national prosperity, and calculated to destroy souls; and that this is not a doubtful, but a clear and demonstrable charge.

The bearing of the thoughts which I shall now submit to you, will be this; that of whatever character be the times in which we live, still we have everything to encourage us in the prosecution of our labours. Not that I look for what our friend Mr. Hall has just been anticipating—a truly Protestant Parliament; we must look at facts as they are, and we cannot expect to have a truly Christian legislation: the thing is not to be had, nor are we to rely upon it. But I place my dependance mainly upon this, that Popery is contrary to the Word of God, that God permits it to exist and to operate for a time for some wise purpose of His own, and that when that purpose is consummated, then Popery will be chased away by Him, even as the cloud before the breath of scorn. When St. Paul says, that the appearance of our Saviour shall not take place, “except there come a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed,” I am persuaded, that it is the mind of the apostle and of the Spirit, not merely to set forth the appearance of Popery as a sign which was to precede the coming of our Lord and Saviour, but to teach us that the appearance of Popery was for some purpose almost (as it were) necessary; that it was the design of God, that the rise of a great apostasy should be that means which He would employ and overrule to the vindication of those beauties of truth, which otherwise might perhaps escape our careless eyes. It is in this way, that God hath continually worked.

The objections of the sceptic, whether learned or unlearned, in different ages, have continually been overruled by God in such a manner as to call forth from believers in Christ such investigations into those claims that were disputed, that they have discovered in them a mine of wealth, of which they were not sensible before; and when we look to the manner in which the spirits of men were agitated at the Reformation, being brought then into close collision with the Church of Rome, we cannot but be sensible how it is that God acts with man, even as man himself acts by the Spirit, which he strikes with a place of iron in order to elicit the spark.

Not in order that we should rest satisfied that God will thus be upon our side to right His own cause, we must prosecute our work in a spirit of love; and it is perfectly possible, through grace, not only to love the men while we hate the principles, but to hate the principles because we love the men. What a beautiful illustration of this have all the children of God in the example of their heavenly Father, who tells us, “Love not the world,” and yet declares, “God so loved the world, that his own only-begotten Son for it.”

I would further remind you of some outward symptoms of that inherent weakness which I have attributed to Popery. Now you will find that every where Popery exists by the indulgence of the most trivial peculiarities; and it is these that take the strongest hold of the fancies and the affections of the blind votaries of that Church. Not long ago, being in the country of France, I on the same day attended worship in the Cathedral of Orleans, and in a much smaller edifice, the devotion of the latter (such as it was) being evidently more sincere than in the former; and what was it that more affected the spirits of those who had most there? It was, that in that Church, which was called St. Paul's Church, there was a black statue of the Virgin Mary, which was considered to be endued with a marvellous power, particularly with respect to mothers and children; Supplication must be continually bringing forth

that which is absurd and monstrous. When a person is disposed to turn aside from the pure teaching of God, there is created within the heart a craving for that which is unnatural. We find, accordingly, both among the Roman Catholics and the Easterns (especially those of India), that it is not the noblest parts (if they have any) of their superstitions that are most attractive to them, but those parts which are most monstrous, absurd, and objectionable. But when any system depends upon such appliances, the very advances of knowledge amongst the family of men, must tend to undermine and overthrow it.

I have also been frequently very powerfully affected by noticing the difference in manner and appearance between the Protestant and Roman Catholic ministers. In France and in Switzerland, the Protestant ministers are men of most accomplished minds, well-informed, gentlemanly, and some of them gifted with great powers of eloquence; but you cannot look upon the poor priest without pity and melancholy. You meet him in his strange, foolish dress, and there seems a constant cloud upon his countenance; generally speaking, there is no ray of intelligence gleaming from his eye, but he seems ashamed and shackled by that which he is, and that in which he is employed. Many of them, indeed, have been clever children, and were, therefore, taken from the schools, and they passed into a service in which almost all they have to do is of a mechanical nature. The powers of their minds are never exercised by the grand ordinance of preaching. A body of men thus stultified by the nature of their functions are not to be looked upon by us with apprehension. It is not to be questioned that Popery is active, but we cannot discover in it much intellectual energy; there are few great men in the Romish Church. It seems to be with Popery as Virgil describes it to be with the ox that was slain by the shepherd who wished to recover his swarm of bees; the body of the ox corrupted, and the insects flew forth on every side. So it is with Popery now; there is a numerous swarm of insects of less power, but still extremely active. But whether we look to their proceedings among the people of Zifferthal, the converts of Dinag, or the Christians of Tahiti, we are reminded of that word of our Lord, “They that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Such means will never prosper. The triumphs which Popery once gained have well-nigh already disappeared. After the third voyage of Columbus, the Pope divided all the world between Spain and Portugal; but where now are the power and majesty of Spain and Portugal? Have they not melted away—

“Like to the baseless fabric of a vision”

One word with respect to the means that we should use; and here I am entirely at one with this Society. It may be a good thing to stay the hand of Government, when it is attempting to do that which is wrong, and which sooner or later the Government itself probably will rue, but it is far better to give ourselves to positive efforts than to negative. We all regard to that poor country of Ireland, our feelings ought never to be that of defiance or ill-will, but of deep compassion and deep shame for ourselves. We have heaped wrong upon wrong upon that unhappy land; we wronged it in the manner in which we gained possession of it,—in the manner in which we forced Popery upon it,—in the manner in which we denied it the Scriptures in its own language,—in the abuse which for years was made of Church patronage by the Government; and now we are adding one more wrong to the list, by strengthening the hands of those who would keep it in spiritual subjection and slavery. We can afford too, to cherish a spirit of Christian love to Ireland, bearing as we are in the far measure of privilege, while she still lies in this bleak shade.

MAYNOOTH.

S P E E C H

OF THE

REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D.,

AT THE GREAT PROTESTANT MEETING, HELD AT EXETER HALL, ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 4, 1846, FOR THE ADOPTION OF A PETITION TO THE QUEEN AGAINST THE PERMANENT AND INCREASED ENDOWMENT OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE OF MAYNOOTH.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Winchelsea, in the Chair.

I AM most anxious, that it should be clearly understood, and deeply impressed upon this great assembly, that in moving on this important question, we are actuated by no enmity to the persons of Roman Catholics. On the contrary, I believe that it is the almost unanimous feeling, that whilst we abhor and detest their principles, we are ready to suffer and to sacrifice for the welfare of their souls. I believe, that just in the ratio in which we detest the creed, we love the men that subscribe it. It is most important, that if any Roman Catholic is present, he should feel that our opposition to this measure is not an opposition to men in the Protestant State or in the Romish Church, but to measures; and that it is because we are by solemn conviction, and on Scripture grounds, opposed to Romish principles, that we are anxious they should not be sustained and spread by the endowments of the nation.

I am also desirous that we should as much as possible abstain from all that may trench upon internal disputes. I have seen in the Committee room to-day, complaints upon this subject in *The Patriot* newspaper. It is important, that we should merge every ripple on the surface one great flood of opposition to the principle of this measure. And I must say, that the conduct of the Dissenters on this question has been most proper; it has been worthy of the Owens, the Howes, and the Baxter of old. If I were a Dissenter, and actuated by a hostility to the Established Churches, greater than my love to my Saviour and my Bible, I should have supported the Maynooth endowment bill; because I should have argued, that if Sir Robert Peel endowed two antagonistic Churches in Ireland, like an acid and an alkali they would neutralise one another, and the issue would be no established Church at all. But while I believe that the measure is calculated to sweep from beneath our feet the foundation principles on which a Church establishment can be most successfully defended, I feel the more delighted with the conduct of those, who have merged their Dissent in their Pro-

testantism, and joined heart and hand in this righteous movement.

I gave a glance at the newspaper reports of the debates in the Lords this morning; and I read, not with surprise, but with considerable pain, the speech of a noble and learned lord, who is half a countryman of my own—I mean Lord Brougham. In the course of that speech, he makes the most wanton and gratuitous attack upon Calvin, as unjust to the dead Reformer, as it was unworthy of the living Baron. I wish his lordship would read Calvin before he criticise him, and then I am sure he will not repeat his own too celebrated aphorism, "that a man is no more accountable for his creed, than for the colour of his skin or the height of his stature." His lordship draws a contrast between Thomas Aquinas and John Calvin, and he comes to the most extraordinary conclusion, (perhaps not extraordinary, however, from him,) that of the twain John Calvin was rather the worse. Now I have read a considerable portion of the writings of John Calvin, and I have read the *Secunda Secundæ*—a very choice portion of the writings of Thomas Aquinas; and the contrast between them is just the contrast between liberty and slavery, between truth and a lie, between love and bloodshed, between light and darkness, between heaven and hell. His lordship is a learned man; he has read a great deal, and written a great deal, and said a great deal more; but if "the brawny of Exeter Hall" should reach his illustrious ear, I would venture to suggest to him that his argument is not quite logical. If he can show us a collect in the Anglican Prayer-Book, or refer to an authorized extemporaneous prayer by any clergyman of the Church of Scotland, or minister of any Secession or Dissenting body in Christendom, praying that we may imitate the example, and imbibe and preach the principles of Calvin, then he may hold us in some measure responsible for Calvin's sentiments. But he can point to no such thing. But I can prove this to be the lie made given to Aquinas in the Roman Church. So truly does the Romish Church

approve the persecuting dogmas inculcated in the writings of Aquinas, that all her members pray on the seventh of March in every year: "O God, who by the wonderful learning of blessed Thomas, Thy confessor, hast illustrated Thy Church, and by his virtues hast enlarged it; grant, we beseech Thee, that we may understand what Thomas Aquinas taught, and in our lives follow what Thomas Aquinas practised." Will his lordship tell me, in reply, on what day Protestants pray to be enabled thus to follow John Calvin? Protestants follow Calvin, as far as Calvin followed Christ; Romanists follow the beatified Thomas absolutely. But besides, the solitary sin to which Calvin was accessory, was not the sin of directly preaching persecution, and advocating it in the case of Servetus, but of acquiescing in the previously existing law of Geneva, which condemned him to death for his blasphemous creed. Neither did Calvin teach principles of persecution in his creed, nor if he did, having just emerged from a persecuting apostacy, are we responsible for what Calvin taught. All his sins were the sins of humanity—his excellencies were drawn from the Word of God; a generous mind would forgive and lose the one, in the splendour and the glory of the other.

But it has been supposed by some of the advocates of a new course of treatment of Romanism, that the establishment or the undowment of a bad system is one of the great prescriptions for curing all its errors. Attached as I am, personally, to the vast practical value and principle of a national establishment, I never could so far worship it and exalt it. Two years ago I went up the Rhine, part of the way in company with my friend Mr. Plumptre, after I had travelled through Belgium, where the Church of Rome is established by law and liberally maintained, with an archiepiscopal seminary at Malines, probably the model from which Maynooth is about to be constructed; and it is natural to ask—has the establishment of Popery done there what Sir R. Peel is sponsor for its doing here? * It has not. In no country did I see the human mind so prostrate; never did I behold superstition so dense; never did I so clearly see, that if the Spirit of God do not eradicate the weeds and dissipate the clouds of Popery, all the Acts of all the Parliaments and States of Europe will not. They will fall upon it like rain drops upon Etna, likely to fan, but utterly unable to extinguish it. In wandering through Belgium, I spent day after day, from five in the morning till eight at night, in the Churches; I was at matins, and vespers, and mid-day mass. I found in every one of the exquisite Churches and great Cathedrals a huge statue of the virgin Mary, about five feet, ten inches, in height, cut in oak, and clothed in beautiful blue satin, trimmed with Mechlin or Valenciennes lace, with the

best French kid glove upon her hands and a rod or symbol of authority in her right hand, together with a crown upon her head; and from morning till night, I saw the Belgians, some of them evidently belonging to the better classes, hurrying into the Churches, kneeling before this idol, and giving it the homage of their hearts and the ascriptions of their tongues. I have here one of the popular prints of this idol; it represents the virgin Mary with her foot upon the serpent's head, intended to illustrate the text—"She shall bruise thy head." This was taken from the castle of Antwerp; and when the gallant Chassé so nobly defended it against the French, it was said to be wholly owing to the Virgin's intercession. I purchased several books of devotion there also, and they all go to show the depth of mental darkness prevailing under that establishment of the Popish priesthood by the Government, which is supposed to be the means of ameliorating Romanism. I counted one day upon one of the pedestals on which the statue of the virgin stood, about fifteen silver hearts, and thirty wax arms and legs, nailed to it; and meeting with a priest, I asked him to explain it. I spoke to him in Latin, and he could understand my Scotch Latin, though I believe he would not understand you; for in Scotland we pronounce Latin in a different way from what you prefer in England. We think it the better and more primitive style; though we may be wrong.

[Here the Rev. Gentleman repeated a few passages from the *Æneid* of Virgil, first with the broad pronunciation of the Scotch, and next with that of the English.]

The explanation of this priest, endowed by the Belgic Government, and educated at an endowed College at Malines, was this: "These wax arms and legs are votive offerings; persons who have had diseases in the leg or arm, which no physician's skill could cure, have had recourse to the blessed virgin, and these are to commemorate her cures." I asked him what were meant, then, by the silver hearts; and he answered—"If a wife has a husband upon the distant sea, and she hears the winds blow and the tempest beat, she thinks of him, and goes to the virgin, and promises her a silver heart if she will bring him safe home." But I heard a different explanation from a hotel-keeper in Ghent; he said—"Suppose some ingenious youth were resolved to have some lady for his partner in life, and found all the usual artillery of sighs and sonnets fail him; he has recourse to the blessed virgin; and some of those silver hearts are to commemorate the effects she has produced upon the hearts of obdurate young ladies."

But I will not dwell upon the characteristics of that unhappy land; I will only say, that it is matter of too notorious observation, that the fostering care of Government has not produced any ameliora-

tion of Roman Catholic principles or practices beyond the channel. Romanism remains in Belgium, what its canons make it—a system, which displaces the atonement of God by the atonement of man,—the worship of Jesus by the worship of the virgin; which puts a padlock on the Bible, and punishes the cottager who reads it, and confiscates the property of the bookseller who sells it; which incorporates all deadly error, and excludes all the precious and renovating principles, which emanate from God, and are embodied in the oracles of everlasting truth. It is not because it is an *anti-social system*, that I so much deprecate its endowment; it is because it *dishonours God*, and ruins precious souls. It is not her crimes against my country, but her blasphemies against my God, that I condemn. As a minister of the everlasting Gospel, I would scarcely come upon this platform, to protest against its anti-social tendencies; but, zealous for the glory of the great Head of the Church, I come here and protest, in the name of God and of all that is sacred, against any national recognition of its awful conspiracy against the glory of heaven and the salvation of souls; its eclipse of the one, its ruin of the other. This, my Christian friends, is too solemn a thing for you to receive by bursts of cheering; it is a very grave and a very awful matter, that the Parliament of mighty England should to any extent form itself into an auxiliary to the Propaganda, for maintaining this terrible system.

I have spoken of its superstition and idolatry. May I briefly illustrate it? I hold in my hand a book, which I obtained after persevering search—the celebrated Psalter of St. Bonaventure; for whom, as well as Aquinas, there is a special collect in the Missal. In the psalms edited by this cardinal saint, you have the name of God expunged in every instance, and the name of the Virgin introduced in its place. As in Psalm xcv.: “Oh! come, let us sing unto our Lady; let us heartily rejoice in the Virgin that brings us salvation: let us come before her presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad in her with psalms.” Psalm II. is—“Have mercy upon me, O Lady, who art called the Mother of Mercy, and according to thy great compassions blot out all mine iniquities.” It opens in the preface with—“Come unto Mary, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and she will give you rest.” Then there is that beautiful hymn in the Anglican Prayer-Book, but which belongs to the Church universal, for it was composed and sung before the Church of England was endowed; namely, the *Te Deum*; which is made to run thus—“We praise thee, O Mary, we acknowledge thee to be the Virgin; all the earth doth worship thee, the spouse of the Eternal; to thee all angels cry aloud, Holy, holy, holy art thou, O Mary, Mother of God.” I know that

some object to what is called the Athanasian Creed; but I presume they will not be reconciled by the version of it presented by Bonaventure—“Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he have a firm faith concerning Mary,” &c. The Litany of the saint runs in the same way—“Spare us, O Lady; from all evil and mischief, deliver us, O Lady.” I recollect a clause in the English Litany, which made a deep impression upon me, when I first came to England and went for the first time into a parish Church, and heard its sublime language not read, but prayed—“In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, Good Lord, deliver us”—words worthy of a Christian to pray, and of a Church to prescribe; but in this execrable version in my hand I find it thus caricatured—“In the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, from all evil, and from the torments of the damned, good Mary, deliver us.” Now this is a book, the teaching of the principles and practices of which we are to endow. But you say—“It is an obsolete document.” I have got ten successive editions of the Psalter and *Te Deum*, published at Rome, between 1831 and 1840, under the sanction of the present Pope and all the authorities of the Vatican. I have these editions in Latin, and in Italian, and with all the authority it is possible for the Church of Rome to impress upon any document that comes out under her auspices. Shall we aid this blasphemous teaching, this heinous idolatry? Shall we concur in nationally endowing what dishonours God and involves the destinies of souls throughout eternity?

But I will say, (though it may be in some measure unpopular,) I cannot concur in unmeasured attacks on Sir Robert Peel; there are mitigating points, we ought not to forget in our estimate of the course pursued by the ministry. They mean what is good, and their motives are good. And do not forget that a considerable body of learned, accomplished, persevering divines in the Church of England have been labouring, during the last ten years, to impress upon the minds of our peers and senators that Romanism is the true type of Christianity, and the Roman Catholic the primitive faith, and that the nearer the Church of England approximates to it, the more it approaches the Ante-Nicene or ancient Church. Is it matter of surprise, that illustrious statesmen, not accustomed to discuss theological questions, and of whose state we are not called to pronounce any judgment in reference to that great principle, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” should at length have their minds infected by such teaching, backed by such erudition, and sustained by such argumentation? There is also another mitigating point; we Pro-

testate have unfortunately been divided among ourselves, and have been taken up in discussing the microscopic jobs in which we differ, that we have ceased to prevail with all our energy the olden cry—"No peace with Rome!" and thus allowed her to push her victories. I trust that henceforth there will be consolidated a permanent union upon Protestant and scriptural principles; and that the result of all this agitation will not be a mere political movement, but some arrangement for the extended preaching of the precious Gospel for the regeneration of Ireland—the only panacea for its grievances, the only antidote to its wrongs, the only lever that can lift it from the oppressive incubus under which it groans, into that light and liberty wherewith Christ makes men free indeed. But there is yet a third misgiving point I urge in behalf of our Premier. I believe that no mere man is a match for Popery; a Christian leaning on God is; a statesman resting on politics is not. Such is the subtlety of that system, that it is the nearest match for Omnipotence the devil ever devised. Eminently powerful, it is yet the most elastic and accommodating; retaining all its principles, and yet adapting itself to every class; one day it will soothe the despot on the throne, and the next day panders to the fierce democracy; one day it will put a rod of iron into the tyrant's hand, and the next day blow the trumpet of a wide-spread rebellion; one day, raging like a lion, it will rouse and array all the passions that disturb society, and the next day it will gambol and slumber like a lamb. It finds society rent and torn; and it comes to statesmen offering to heal it; it finds kings threatened with rebellion, and it asks for power, and promises to quell it by its bulw. Its promises are Paradise; its performance Pandemonium, *sancti solitudinem; pauci appetit.*

I rejoice exceedingly, that there is not a Christian body, which has not stood forth by great majorities against the endowment of this system. The Church of England, notwithstanding some episcopal and presbyterian difficulties, has on the whole given a sound Protestant opposition to this national deviation of duty. The Church of Scotland, to which I belong, has sustained the other day in the General Assembly, by a majority of 187 to 41 no petition against it; and of the minority of 41 in the General Assembly, (composed chiefly, I believe, of lay elders,) there was not one that ventured to say he approved of the principle on which the measure is based. I rejoice to say, that not only have the two establishments thus acted, but, among Nonconformists, that noble and zealous body, the Free Secession Church, has acted very much in the same way. Common principles are in jeopardy. When I, a minister of the Established Church, am tied to

one fetter in Smithfield, and my friend Mr. Hamilton of the Free Secession Church, (who, I believe, is to take a resolution,) to another, the flame that consumes us will show how microscopic were the points on which we differed—how majestic and glorious the truths on which we are agreed. The Wesleyans too, another Nonconformist body, have acted nobly. I envy them the abuse they have received; I never was so tempted to become a Wesleyan, as when I read, that Daniel O'Connell, that composite of Nere and Nebuchadnezzar, feeling his power to be shaken a little, wrote an abusive letter about the Wesleyans on one side, and when Lord Brougham, seeing a powerful demonstration raised against Maynooth, waxed furious against the Wesleyans—though he must have forgotten some of his theology last night when he attacked them under the misnomer of Calvinists. Throughout the whole of this matter they have taken a most prominent part; I thank them—I hail them as brethren; we are brethren in aims, and rivals only in renown. Our Independent and Baptist brethren, the last body of Nonconformists, also have fought nobly. God grant that this union, begun under so favourable auspices, and cemented round the altars of our father land, may never be dissolved in feeling or sympathy until the Church in grace be lost in the Church in glory—the Church militant in the splendour of a cloudless millennial morn, and the Church of Britain has become the Church of mankind. You have heard the ancient fable of the woodman, who applied to the trees to give him wood sufficient to make a handle for his axe, and at last found a tree stupid enough or traitor enough to give him a branch; possessed of which, he instantly set to work and hewed down the whole forest. Daniel O'Connell applied to the Church of England, but has got no handle, or a very rotten one; he tried the Church of Scotland and has gotten a few rotten sprigs, and these do not fit; the Wesleyans will not give even a twig; and I hope the old disturber will get no handle for his axe, or one that will snap asunder, and so these majestic and glorious olden trees, that have been the beauty and bulwark of Old England, will yet flourish, when his remains mouldier at their roots.

It has been earnestly urged, that the measure will produce peace. I value peace, and I wish it universally prevailed; but peace, let it be remembered, is not a tree—it is only a product. Truth is the stem—peace is the blossom. Cut down the thorns, and the stem will bear the accents of rejoicing spring, and again throw forth beautiful buds, to be unfolded in more beautiful blossoms; but cut down the stem, eradicate the root, and no sun will make bud or blossom appear any more. Sir Robert Peel is trying, honestly but impotently, to produce peace without truth—

the blessing without the stain. And even peace may be purchased at too high a price. If the endowment of Popery be eventually the disendowment of the Church in Ireland, and the extermination of the long run of all the others, I fear we shall find our Irish peace purchased at too dear a rate. Ireland cannot be Protestant before it be peaceful. The God of heaven has pronounced its character—"they say, Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

It has been argued also, that there is an overwhelming majesty of Roman Catholics in Ireland, and therefore of the overwhelming majority we ought to endow. I confess, my lord, that the most startling part of this whole subject, is not the measure itself, but that infidel principle broached in the discussion. If the principle of a national establishment depends for its existence solely on majorities, it is not worth keeping up for another twelvemonth. It is indefensible. But truth depends upon no such basis. If the whole of this hall were to catch some dreadful inspiration of the damned, and to cry out with fearful infatuation and with unanimous shout, that Popery is truth; and if yet one child stood forth in that gallery at the other end, and exclaimed that Popery is false, and Protestantism true; that child would be right, and the whole hall would be wrong. We do not count heads for orthodoxy—we appeal to texts alone. Truth remains truth, when we must follow her to the stake; falsehood remains falsehood, when all the riches of the earth are piled upon her altars, and the embroidery of the world is heaped upon her shrines. "To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

It has been urged, that the Church of Rome merely holds a little more than we do, and that as she embraces all that we hold, she must have as great a chance of salvation as we have. This may be mathematics, but it is not morals. You are aware, that the most celebrated and authoritative formula of that Church is the Creed of Pope Pius IV.; the first twelve articles of it constitute the Nicene Creed, and belong to the year 325; the last twelve articles of it constitute the Popish creed, strictly so called, and belong to the year 1564. It is perfectly true, that both Churches do hold the Nicene creed. But there is the difference—we receive the articles of that creed in order to believe them, but she welcomes them as Jael welcomed the traveller—he pla him to the earth and destroy him. Here she is "the mystery of iniquity." She shows you twelve gates of glass, and bids you mark how the sun sets the sun sets under the sun through them; and when she has introduced you, she puts twelve shutters upon them, and leaves you to the dim lights of her traditions. She shows you

twelve bundles of pure water, taken from a good spring; but then she lets fall into them twelve drops of germs acid. Most pure, no doubt, is the water; but such is the virus of the additional element, that it neutralises and poisons the whole.

It is said, that Popery is now a changed religion, and that it is about to shake up obsolete canons, ending them like mummies the face of the modern Church of Rome. This argument involves the admission, that the church of Rome has been something worse than we see it now. But it overlooks the fact, that her canons are stereotyped. She is a fixture. She is inflexible; she is, therefore, unchangeable. Prove to her people that one stone has fallen from her arch, that one article of her faith has been repealed, and you prove that she has ceased to be what she pretends to be—inflexible; and thus the main element of her witchery is gone. I know, the Roman Catholic will thank you to say she is changed; but he laughs at his slave at your folly, and pockets the fruits of your decision. He believes that she has undergone no change; that she remains, in her persecuting principles, the same as when Dominus Deus fought his foes in Ireland, or Dominick his in Spain. *Semper eadem* is her motto; or, to give you the Irishman's translation of that phrase, as he applied it to his wife, "she gets worse and worse."

But I beg you to bear in mind, that a new principle is now introduced in national policy—a new movement in a new direction, prolific of new and ominous results; or, as Mr Shiel called it—"the first of a series of new measures towards Ireland." Do you think, that if Maynooth gets £26,000 a year, Stonyhurst and Oscott will be quiet, or ought to be quiet? No; they will come to the Government, especially in a day when union is made the pretext and pioneer for another, and they will ask for an endowment, not then as liberality, but as equal justice. You are opening a door, which will be crowded with applicants, no longer suppliant for bounty, but clamorous for rights. And as for Rome, she must be all, if she be anything—and *Caesar, est nil*.

It has been urged, that unless you thus constitute, you will have internal civil war; or Ireland may be made an outpost, on which America and France can plant their banners, and wage a successful conflict with England. On this point I believe the remarkable statements made in the Lords by the Duke of Wellington—I do not believe the representations of those, who address this reason; I firmly believe there is no danger of either result. But if you want to produce civil war in all the provinces of Ireland, if you want to apply these elements that will excite and madden every tall passion in the unregenerate man's heart till he is driven by them, as by a

whatsoever, pay for inducting the decess principles contained in the Maynooth class books and standards. By so doing, you pour oil upon the flame, you add fuel to the smouldering fire, and nothing, unintentionally it may be, the very equality you would quell. Should it be permitted, in the providence of God, that England should be plunged in foreign war, let her continue at peace with God, by loyalty to His will, and she will emerge from war like gold from the furnace. To escape war with man, we may not rush into war with God. Wellington's laurels, bright, enduring, imperishable, (oh! that there had not been among them one fading leaf!) were not the pride and glory of his transcendent genius, or of the bravery of his brave soldiers, but of the prayers of England's friendless and widows and orphans. While our country was Protestant, her armies swept wide Europe, and left the impress of their prowess wherever they left the vestiges of their presence; and, habited and blessed of Him to whom the shields of the earth belong, her battles will again be victorious, and the roll of her conquering drum the prelude to yet more brilliant achievements.

Another plea has been adduced, that this endowment will give a better education to the Irish priests. Mr. Roebuck, in one of his *speeches in the Commons*, said, that if they were Hindoos or Mahomedans, he would educate them by national endowments in their respective creeds. He would educate the Unitarians in the faith, that 'Christ is God'; he would educate the Socinians in the scepticism, that 'Christ is not God.' He would teach the Romanist to worship the Virgin Mary; and he would educate the Protestant to pronounce it idolatry. What limit could be assigned to such liberality? In what would he not educate humanity? Only teach, and it is of no consequence whether it be falsehood, fanaticism, or folly!

But will the education at Maynooth really improve the rising priests? Will it be education in the truths of the Bible, or in the fables of the Breviary? In holy ethics, or in the *Summa* of Bally, said the anti-social dogma's of Thomas Aquinas? It may be in anything, and in any way; for so little control is the State to have over teacher or learner, that, as it has been stated, in order not to spell the "guilt" of the measure, England shall merely stand at the door of Maynooth, holding a bag, into which the priests may dip their digits, and help themselves. They may teach the principles of murder, sedition, privy conspiracy, rebellion, still the State will apply no check, and exercise no control. England must be merely the dumb purveyor of Maynooth. If it be just to pay for teaching Jesuitism in 1845, it was wrong to expel the Jesuits in 1829.

It has been urged, that Maynooth is very poor, and therefore we ought to help it out

the ground of charity. Then, Romanism can either demand as a right, or sue and supplicate as a boon. Will not Tinsley, and Waterford, and Carlow, even find out their poverty also? But the Irish Romanists send about £1,000 a month to the Propaganda, and contribute about £400 a week to O'Connell, and the cause of repeal. Does this look like poverty?

But, says Mr. Macaulay, what the State does, the State ought to do well. True; and if Maynooth has proved a national blessing, and is entitled to distinctive rewards, by all means let the State reward it, and do it well. But if Maynooth can be proved to have been, within its limits, rather a national curse, then the State's right way of doing it well is to root it out altogether, and endow in its stead the *Kildare*, or other *scriptural* schools.

It is said, that this endowment will make the priests loyal. The almost invariable rule of former times, was to reward men because they were loyal; the new process, strange as it may appear, would seem to be, to reward ambitious men, in order to make them loyal. Does the warm embrace of the State generate loyalty in rebels? Is Irish loyalty a marketable article? Does loyalty leap into the priest's heart the moment the State stipend descends into his pocket? But if this new plan is tried at Maynooth, may not the rogues in the Old Bailey be paid so much a head, in order to make them honest? Thus, neither *prevention*—the prescription of Christian philanthropy; nor *punishment*—the preference of statesmen; but *payment* is the grand panacea for eradicating all moral evils, and fostering the contrary virtues! Endow Maynooth, and, lo! Luthers and Knaues will go forth from its cloisters; endow Botany Bay, and Howards and Ashleys will start up in it, while its desert acres will blossom as the rose! Out on such fooleries!

But it is alleged, that by our pursuing the course we have adopted, we shall embarrass the Conservative government. Surely, we select men to be the organs of the principles we espouse, and the exponents of the policy we prefer, and not to be popes, whose decrees we must bow to, whether they be consistent or not. I respect Sir Robert Peel—I *revere* and defer to the Word of God. I respect him so much, that I cannot worship him. The path of principle is the path of policy; better embarrass a party, than place in peril the most precious interests of the empire. Were a man walking blindfold to the edge of a precipice, or preparing to drink a cup of poison, would you let him walk to the end, and quietly take the other, assigning the plea, that you did not like to disturb him? The premier of England may yet live to thank your lordship and Exeter Hall for its remonstrances, and to feel that his majority on the 18th of April was his most dangerous defeat; and what seemed

the laurels of the conqueror, were, in reality, only the thorns around the head of the victim.

But it is urged—'You clergymen are becoming politicians.' It is not in my judgment a mere political question, with which I have nothing to do; but a great Protestant question. And if it be true that it involves such interests as have been referred to, and implies such sacrifices as I have stated, I do think a clergyman may be pardoned for coming down for once from his pulpit and appearing on this platform. Were some pupil of Dessein's Dons to point a pistol at your lordship's head, would any one say, if I rose to dash aside his hand, 'Pray, do not step out of the minister's province; to protect your lordship, and keep the peace, is the duty of the policeman?' I am sure I do not miscalculate the feelings of this great assembly, when I assert, you would forgive the pastor for becoming for the moment the policeman. But the priests of Maynooth are presenting, not a pistol, but arranging a masked battery of cannon for the destruction of our most hallowed institutions, and the nation is about to supply the artillerymen and ammunition, unconscious of the danger; and I should be unfaithful to my Church, my country, and my God, if I did not raise the solemn warning, and openly protest against it. Quiescence would be treachery, neutrality cowardice, and silence sin.

I trust we are not approximating to the example of France, in which all religions are endowed. Surely the fruits that France has borne, do not commend her as a precedent in this. A restless populace, and a rocking throne, are emphatically hers. Do we envy this? I must say, that rather than acquiesce in the French system, which endows all sects and creeds—the teachers of idolatry, and the preachers of truth, much as I love the Church of my fathers, I would say—Perish both our establishments to their very foundations. Such endowment would not be impartiality—it would be *infidelity*; it would not be *liberalism*—it would be *intolerance*; and, attached as I am, to the Church of Scotland, desirous (if God enable me) to live and die in that Church, yet if such attachment implied, as, thank God, it does not yet, approval of this principle, I would, with Mr. Hamilton, leave it. Such policy, I trust, we shall none of us live to see in the councils of the land; and such sacrifices will then be unequalled for.

But say some—'You have already endowed Episcopacy in England, and Presbytery in Scotland, and why not Romanism in Ireland?' The best reply will be the shortest: you have given Englishmen *whiskey* bread, and Scotchmen *catmeal* cakes, and why not give Irishmen *arson*, or *prison* food? If Church endowments be right, it is because they are the endowments of truth. On no inferior ground,

can any such national support of a Church, be worthy of defence.

It is, surely, (I put it to Protestant statesmen,) a painful consideration, that we are asked to contribute, through the channels of national support, to the manufactory of priests, that they may spread like locusts throughout the country, and for the maintenance of a system, which infects the whole social atmosphere with superstition—which sends an argus-eyed police into all the relationships of life, which poisons the well-springs of social being, and ultimately smokes the nations that have suffered from its success, to pass penal enactments against it, in order to save themselves from utter prostration. You must never suffer the Church of Rome to become the Irish National Establishment, should such an attempt be made by any party. Your illustrious Reformers watch you from their beds of glory. They adjure you by their re-opening wounds to be faithful—do hand down to your children, if not improved, at least not impaired, the blood-bought heritage they left you; and we to our children, if we shrink from duty, because it may once more be set in perilous responsibility. We must yet learn to see in sainted martyrs, not phenomena, whose brilliant transit through the world proclaims their having been here, but in each a projection only of our own soul, an ordinary model for us and others, to imitate.

I rejoice to see, that this unhappy measure is being overruled for good. It was thought, by some, that Protestantism was dead; it turns out to have been only asleep,—culpably I admit, but yet only asleep. It waited for the stamp of some foot, firm and energetic enough to rouse it from its slumbers. It waited till it heard a voice "sleep no more," and it arose, and now fills broad England with its enthusiasm, and we hope, ere long, wide Europe with its thunders. Like Haman, deceived and beguiled, it had been too long sleeping upon the lap of apathy, but it no sooner heard the shout, "The Philistines be upon thee," than it recollected the secret springs of its indomitable power, shook again its locks of strength, and put on its attributes of grandeur, its robes of victory. Let it now set. It will reimburse itself. Let its prescriptions be practically and powerfully displayed. I do not prescribe to you how to act in questions, except so far as Moses does, whose oracles are sound. But this much I will say; whether you vote for Tories or for Whigs, vote for none but sound-hearted Protestants. Permit me to teach you by an anecdote. I have read of a nobleman who advertised for a coachman. He asked the first applicant, an Englishman, how near he could drive to a precipice, without driving over it; the man replied, he thought within six feet. The next candidate was a Scotchman; and a.

we are much more anxious, and are supposed more anxious not to lose a good situation than may offer he said he would undertake to drive safely within three feet of a precipice. Then came an Irishman, and when he was asked, "how near to a precipice would you undertake to drive your master without peril?"—he answered, "Oh! please your honour, I would drive you the furthest off from it possible." "That's the coachman for me," was the reply. Now do not elect the member who persecutes upon the edge or within six or three feet of the precipice of Popery, but choose the representative, who, whatever else he do, will drive you the furthest possible from it.

Let me ask you too, not to be discouraged in this great controversy. You are too prone to be so. Irishmen will, Englishmen may, but we Scotchmen never; we have a love to our country, an attachment to our Church, and a loyalty to our Queen, that do not falter in the worst, nor weary in the best of times. Learn something of the spirit of a countryman of mine, a Highland piper, who was taken prisoner at I think, the battle of Waterloo. Napoleon was struck with his mountain dress and his sunny limbs, and asked him to play on his instrument, so numerous in your Anglian ears but which, I assure you sounds magnificent in our glens and mountains and grey moors. "Play a pibroch," said Napoleon, and the Highlander played it.

"Play a march," it was done. "Play a retreat," "Na, na," said Donald, "I never learned to play a retreat. No! I retentant retreat—I say, play any march or movement you like, but no retreat."

The great principles involved in this question are unapexakably important. If I might venture to untold the reverend auspices of our beloved land, and to cast its great horoscope in that sky in which nations have waxed and crepuscles waned, I would solemnly declare that the crisis seems rapidly arriving around which will gather and converge destinies for good or evil, decisive and final. At such a period there ought to be less of mere excitement and personal feeling, and more of deep-toned and fervent prayer, that God would put it into the hearts of our ministers and statesmen, and our most gracious Queen, to stand steadfast still to "the faith once delivered to the saints." The Church of God in England's heart is the secret of the stability and splendour of the crown on England's brow. Roth must flourish and fall together. Like Jacob of old, we may wrestle

during the long dark night, but the morning will burst in benedictions around us. It was said, that the bones of the patriarch, Joseph, in their Egyptian sepulchre, were to the Israelites the pledge that God would revisit them, and deliver them, and carry them to Canaan. Upon the moors of Scotland, and in England's Smithfield, there reposes the sacred dust of illustrious Reformers—the awful pledges that God will yet have mercy upon us, and that the hour of our visitation shall prove the hour of our triumphant and glorious deliverance. For the Church of God I have no fears. God has her walls continually before Him. Her destiny is linked with the throne of heaven. Should we be driven from our altars, our pulpits, our Churches, and our Chapels by rampant Romanism, the God that built the universe and gemmed the sky with all its stars, will build us temples. Persecution itself will protect us. The hills will be our castles, the tangled thickets our palisade, and the living God our ally. The Gospel in our country, however let us not forget, is the life-blood of all its institutions, the oxygen of our atmosphere. Christianity is the parent oak, around which social prosperity and riches rise and grow dependent on it for support and feeding, on its trunk destroy it—cut it down—and you may write upon the altars in churches and palaces of England, "Ichabod! Ichabod—the glory is departed."

But I am not with out bright anticipations of the ultimate issue. Clouds however black are not eternal nor immutable. The holy cause of heaven shall not want upholders nor sufferers if needs be. Christianity shall yet emerge from the tents of Misrael and the tabernacles of Kedar leaving behind her the scenes of her bondage, and put on her coronation robes and move by universal love to universal empire the emperatrix of the oppressed—the ambrosia of heaven—the benefactress of the earth. And where so ever upon God's earth the finger of antichrist has written *Mera*, bitterness there in deep, illuminated and imperishable letters the finger of Jesus shall inscribe *Noon*, beautiful. The grandeur of the man shall shine in all the glory of the saint, and we shall be called Nephthah, and our land no longer Ichabod but Beulah, and the Church of Jesus shall go forth with all the speed and splendour of an angel's wing, transforming all she touches till "the Gentiles see her righteousness, and all kings her glory."

MAYNOOTH.

SPEECH

OF THE

REV. R. J. M'GHEE, M.A.,

AT THE GREAT PROTESTANT MEETING, HELD AT EXETER HALL, ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 4, 1846, FOR THE ADOPTION OF A PETITION TO THE QUEEN AGAINST THE BILL FOR THE PERMANENT AND INCREASED ENDOWMENT OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE OF MAYNOOTH.

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I HAVE to offer an apology to your lordship and this meeting, for presuming to intrude upon your notice this day, without the least preparation for addressing you; but I felt it my duty to call the attention of those who are assembled here, to what I consider a very important document, that appeared in the *Times* of this morning—a speech attributed to a noble and learned lord, and made in the House of Lords; I mean Lord Brougham. I believe there is not an individual in England, who would more readily and more cheerfully assent to any investigation of any sentiments of his, than that noble and learned lord. I believe, as a constant and firm advocate of civil and religious liberty, public discussion, and the freedom of the people and the press, there is no man in England, who would more gladly wish, that we should enjoy that privilege; and therefore, I only regret that I have not the pleasure of seeing him on this platform. I trust the day will come, and is not far distant, when he will feel it his duty and his privilege to stand forward and take a bold and prominent part, in asserting the civil and religious liberties of his country, as I regret to say that he is now (most unconsciously, I am confident,) the advocate of civil and religious slavery.

I have just had time to note some commentaries in the words attributed in this paper to the noble and learned lord.

"The right rev. prelate had complained, that under this bill there would be no security for the good government of the College of Maynooth. That was not the case. By this bill the trustees were made a corporation, and as a corporation they would have the power to make bye-laws. They would also have the power to make, within certain limits, regulations as to doctrine. There were also visitors, who were bound to visit the college at certain times. The right rev. prelate was in error in stating that hitherto the visitation of the college had been ineffectual."

I thought, in reading this passage, that I really had not examined the bill; and I opened it to look at the passage where the provision alluded to by the noble and learned lord is made. He says—"They would also have the power to make, within certain limits, regulations as to doctrine."

I turn to the bill. "Provided always, and be it enacted, that the authority of the said visitors shall not extend to, or in any manner affect, the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion, or the religious doctrine or discipline thereof, within the said college or seminary, otherwise than as hereinafter is provided; and that in visiting the said college or seminary, the said visitors shall judge and determine according to such bye-laws, rules and regulations, as have been or shall be made for the government and discipline thereof, pursuant to the provisions of the said rected acts, or of this act, respectively." And what is it, that is "otherwise hereinafter provided?" Why, "that in all matters which relate to the exercise, doctrine and discipline of the Roman Catholic religion, the visitatorial power over the said college shall be exercised exclusively by such of the visitors as are or shall be of the Roman Catholic religion, in the presence of the other visitors (appointed by her Majesty), if they or any of them shall think proper to attend."

What, then, is the provision of this bill? That the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops of Ireland—the trustees of Maynooth—shall have the power of examining the pupils or the professors, in the presence of the judges and the chancellor, in all matters which relate to the exercise, doctrine and discipline of the Roman Catholic religion. Let me ask, will these most rev. and right rev. doctors bring forward the principles of their college before the chancellor and the judges, and ask the professors whether they teach the violation of oaths, and intolerant and persecuting doctrines, and the "doctrines of sedition? Will such questions be asked by those individuals? or if they are, will these principles be acknowledged by the professors and pupils of the college? Will those men elicit from the professors and pupils of their college in the presence of the judges and the chancellor, those principles, which they have themselves denied upon their oaths again and again—falsely denied—before the Committee of Parliament?

Such is the provision made in the bill for the visitation of the college. But I should not have presumed to notice any remarks upon this bill generally, or to address this

meeting, if statements had not been brought forward, which involve the truth or falsehood of what has been alleged by me upon this platform; and with the blessing of my God, so long as He is pleased to spare me health and strength—a voice to speak and a pen to write, there is not a living man, or a living power, from the lowest to the highest, in the British empire, not a lord of Parliament nor a priest of the Church of Rome, that shall ever make a statement, which involves the falsehood of any that I have made, but I will stand forward boldly before this nation, and reiterate and prove that statement as I can. I never stood upon this platform, without not only giving leave to, but demanding, that the men, against whom the accusations made by me were brought, should come forward, or authorise persons to do so in their name, to meet and to refute those statements, if they were able; I never proposed a resolution at any public meeting, when I did not demand of the men whose names and principles were included in that resolution, to stand upon the platform in the Rotunda in Dublin, and bring an equal number of Roman Catholics with Protestants, and discuss those resolutions before them, if they were able to do so; and I never met one man, Mr. Daniel O'Connell or Dr. Murray, one priest or professor in Ireland, who would venture to do so. Before I came over here on this occasion, I drew out, under the head of ten or twelve objections to this bill, all the corrupt doctrines and evil practices taught at Maynooth; I sent that, before the public meeting in Dublin, to the president of Maynooth, and hearing he was ill, I wrote to the vicar-provost, and I called on them, if they were able to object to any of those statements of mine, to come forward in the Rotunda and do so. The gentlemen, however, have preserved a most profound and respectful silence.

I proceed to consider some of these statements of my lord Brougham, which involve the truth of those I have made.

"On another occasion an inquiry was set on foot, as to whether it was taught in the college, that it was legitimate for the priests to refuse to give evidence in courts of justice on the plea of being restrained by oaths. The answer was distinctly in the negative; it was stated that it was the duty of Roman Catholics so situated to answer on oath under such circumstances, notwithstanding any implied spiritual engagement."

Now it is not necessary for me to enter into any statement, generally speaking, of the obligation of oaths in the Roman Catholic Church; for there is another document in this same newspaper, in which there is a statement of another noble lord, who has laid the principles of the Papacy

on oaths faithfully before the British Parliament in the house of Peers; and that noble lord is he, whom it is our privilege to have presiding over us this day. But the question here is, respecting the evidence of priests on oath, and therefore I confine myself exclusively to that; and I shall read to the meeting the doctrine of Maynooth on that point.

"If a priest should be interrogated by a magistrate of those things which he knows only from confession, he ought to answer that he is ignorant of them; yea, and to swear the same, without any danger of a falsehood (*sabque ulla mendacii periculo*). The reason is, according to Estius, because he who answers according to the mind of the person who asks him, neither tells a lie nor equivocates, and says nothing but the truth; but this is the state of the priest in the case aforesaid, for the Judge does not demand from him what he knows in the way of confession, in which he exercises the part of God, but he asks him what he knows as man, and therefore out of confession. All the theologians agree with Estius." [*Dealogue de Penitentiâ* p. 292]. And so, because in the confessional he plays the part of God, he comes out of the confessional, and calls God to witness that he knows nothing at all about it!

Now this is not a book taken out of the range of Papal theology, and introduced into the College of Maynooth, in which there are some bad things, (as it is said there are in all books,)—this is not a book of that description, in which some bad things remain, which could not well be blotted out for the College of Manooth; but this is a book written by the professor at Maynooth, printed for the College of Maynooth, and compiled by that man to instruct and guide the pupils, who are instructed in that college.

But since this is a doctrine taught in Maynooth, we will ask, how is this doctrine exemplified? And I will not go to the confessional; I will not investigate what priests have answered, who were examined respecting things taught or learned in the confessional; but I shall go to points in which not only Roman Catholic priests, but Roman Catholic bishops, have been examined, on their oath, on things which they did not know by confessional, and you shall hear the influence of this doctrine on those gentlemen. Here is the evidence given by Dr. Doyle before the Committee of the House of Lords in 1825, on the subject of the permission of the reading of the Scriptures in Ireland—a subject in which I trust the Protestants of England will take a deep and anxious interest. "Have you heard, or have you any knowledge, that the sacraments of the Church have been refused to those who have been in power—

sion of such books (Bibles and Testaments), and have not delivered them up, in consequence of the admonition?" "I have not heard of any such thing; before your lordships and before God, I never did." "Could it have been done in any part of Ireland, and you not know it?" "I think it might, and I am quite sure that there are persons among our clergy, of so warm and heated feelings, as to do precisely what has been stated; but I have stated before, I do not know of its being done, but it might have been done, I am quite sure, considering the character of some of our young clergy, and old ones too; we have got enthusiasts as they have in all Churches." That was the evidence given by Dr. Doyle before the Committee of the House of Lords in England, on the 21st of March, 1825, when it was necessary to make out a smooth case before the people of this country. But the same individual was examined, only twenty four days afterwards, on the 14th of April, before the Commissioners of Education, in the presence of other bishops; and this is the evidence, which the prime minister of England has declared, that he and the whole cabinet have diligently studied, before they introduced this measure, so as to render it unnecessary for them to make any further inquiry. He is asked—"Would you allow any of the peasantry of Ireland, who might persevere in reading the Bible in the authorised version, after having been prohibited by your clergy, to be received to the sacraments?" "Certainly I would not." "You would consider them, in effect, being guilty of contemptuous disobedience to your Church?" "Certainly." He had before sworn, in England, that some enthusiastic young men in his Church might perhaps have done it, but before God he never heard of it; but in Ireland he swears, he would do it himself! Such is the oath of a man instructed in the doctrines of the College of Maynooth, which the British Parliament is about to endow.

Take another case—the case of a bishop who, to get emancipation and political power, had taken an oath, in conjunction with all the Roman Catholic bishops in Ireland, "disclaiming, disavowing and solemnly abjuring any intention to subvert the Church Establishment, as settled by law, and swearing that he would never exercise any privilege to which he might be entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion." Yet here is an extract from his letter to the bishop of Exeter on the subject: "Far, then, from shrinking from any avowal of hostility to a system fraught with such injustice, I frankly own, that the Establishment has been, and shall continue to be, the object of every legal and constitutional opposition in my power; however irreconcilable you may deem such a declaration with the obligation of our

oath, I must protest against your competency to expound its meaning, as the guide for my theology." What is this, but a declaration, that when he was taking his oath, he did not feel his oath, he did not believe his oath, he despised his oath, he trampled upon his oath, but it was expedient to take it in order to blind the people of England? Such is the influence of that Maynooth doctrine on oaths; and those individuals are now to be intrusted with the public money, to select young men, and bring them under the influence of the same education, with which they have been corrupted themselves.

But my lord Brougham proceeded further: "There was no man in that House or out of it, who could surpass him in the belief he entertained of the errors of the Roman Catholic system, and of the evil tendency, politically speaking, of the Roman Catholic policy. He said nothing whatever about articles of faith; that House was not the fit place to discuss such sacred points; let those articles of faith—which only concerned the soul of man and his relation to the supreme Being—be sacred from discussion in that place; he had his own opinion on those subjects, but it was needless to enter on them on that occasion. But he could speak of those doctrines, which had been engrafted on the Catholic faith by the wit of man, by men crowned with the mitre and armed with the crozier, by popes and by bishops; as to those, he felt no hesitation in treating of them, because they did not approach the religious part of the question by a hundred leagues. He would not refer to them at all, but that they formed the subject of nine-tenths of the arguments, that had been urged against the bill." I rejoice to see the bold and honest avowal of faithful attachment to Protestant principles, with which the noble and learned lord begins; and I have not the least doubt, that it is only want of information on this important subject, that could lead him to desire to endow such an iniquitous system, as that of the College of Maynooth.

His lordship says, that "the doctrines engrafted on the Catholic faith by popes and bishops, do not approach the religious part of the question by a hundred leagues." Why, they are inseparably identified with the religion of the Church of Rome. I have with me here the creed of the ancient Catholic Church, the creed which we call the Nicene creed, established at the council of Nice in 324, recapitulated at the council of Constantinople in 381, at the council of Ephesus in 431, and at the council of Chalcedon in 451, and proved to have remained unchanged in 1546; for in that year, in the third session of the council of Trent, that council recites it as the creed of the Christian Church, which is

the creed received by all who call themselves Christians over the world, and which is the true and only foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. Be that there was no such thing as the creed of the Church of Rome, before 1546; but all Christendom being overspread with error, Rome desiring to reform the Church, held her council of Trent, and "engrafted" (as the noble and learned lord has it,) twelve erroneous doctrines upon the ancient Catholic faith; while England, also desiring to reform the Church, cast off the iniquities that had crept over Christendom, and resolved to adhere only to that ancient faith, without addition,—which faith she still keeps whole and undefiled. Accordingly, before the Council of Trent was over, pope Pius IV., on the 9th of December 1564, modelled all these abominable errors into a modern creed, consisting of twelve articles, which he added to the ancient Christian creed; and instead of being "a hundred leagues" asunder, they follow close upon the ancient Nicene creed, so that though I have here written between them—"Twelve novel articles added to this ancient creed by pope Pius IV., and published as the creed of the modern Church of Rome, December 9, 1564," those words are an audacious interpolation of my own. The old Nicene creed, and the twelve new errors, are incorporated by pope Pius IV. into one creed, which it calls the "faith, out of which none can be saved;" and the last article of which is—"I likewise profess and undoubtedly receive all other things delivered, defined and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy council of Trent; and likewise I also condemn, reject and anathematise all things contrary thereto, and all heresies whatsoever, condemned, rejected and anathematized by the Church." The Church of Rome thus adopts and takes as her own, all that the sacred canons and general councils have declared; it is all sworn to by every beneficed priest, and every professor in Maynooth; and yet the noble and learned lord speaks of these corrupt doctrines as being "a hundred leagues" from those given taught at Maynooth!

His lordship goes on:—"But even admitting all that was said about the doctrines taught at Maynooth—admitting that all those pernicious books were to be found there—still they only went to destroy the argument that was founded upon them; if those doctrines were now taught at Maynooth, would opposing that increase of the grant prevent their being taught?" Opposing the increase of the grant, could not prevent their being taught; but the thing then moved for, would prevent it—as honest, faithful inquiry, bringing them out in evidence before the face of the nation.

I say, that the lay Roman Catholics of Ireland themselves would not endure to have them taught in their college, if they were brought out as they ought to be, and diffused through the length and breadth of Ireland; and they ought to be printed and circulated through the empire, that every Roman Catholic might know what are the real principles inculcated in his college, and that it is not from want of liberality, or generosity, or kindness, or affection, that the people of England are unwilling to endorse it, but because that college teaches iniquities, which he himself could not desire to have disseminated. But though voting against that grant would not prevent these doctrines from being taught, giving that grant increases the facility of their being taught. Giving that grant has them taught under the sanction and authority of the British Parliament. Giving that grant has them incorporated with the laws of England; and so the law of England, the Parliament of England, the Crown of England, is dishonoured, by being made the patron, the protector, the endower of the iniquitous system, that is taught in the college of Maynooth.

But the next sentence of the noble and learned lord is one, to which I earnestly call your attention: "The noble earl opposite was not wrong in his facts as to the passages, which were to be found in the books used at Maynooth, but he took a wrong issue founded on those facts. It was quite a mistake, to suppose that the passages he had referred to, from the statute books and the decretals, from Menochius and Maldonatus, from Bailly and from Collett, were not to be found in the books used at Maynooth; every one of those quotations of the noble earl was right, chapter and verse, and all those bad doctrines were to be found in those books." Why, the testimony we have been adducing has been denounced as "the bray of Exeter Hall;" but here is "the bray of Exeter Hall" echoed by the loud, sonorous voice of the noble and learned lord in his place in Parliament. Lord Brougham declares, (and who will dare to doubt Lord Brougham's word?) that every document adduced upon this platform, is to be found in the class books and standards of Maynooth. From my heart I thank the noble and learned lord for his honest admission; he would not admit such facts, if he did not know them to be true. But his lordship draws a wrong conclusion; as many a logician has done, from the premises he has admitted.

He proceeds:—"But the question did not depend on what was to be found in those books, and therefore it was not necessary for him to enter into their contents. No one could doubt, that those doctrines concerning heresies, and the obligation of

oaths, were to be found in St. Thomas Aquinas, and Maldonatus, and even in St. Augustin, one of the fathers of the Church." Noble, admirable admission! We have no more necessity to go into the evidence of these things at Exeter Hall; it is a fact admitted, acknowledged, authenticated by Lord Brougham, that the class books and standards of Maynooth contain all the abominable doctrines we have ascribed to them. But mark the error of his conclusion. "But to show that all those doctrines formed part of the books at Maynooth, had no bearing on the question; the question was, what was really taught at Maynooth." The noble and learned lord here appears to have fallen into the same marvellous mistake with Mr. Wyse,—that the students at Maynooth really do not learn the principles that are to be found in their books. The *onus probandi* certainly lies upon him; and he ought to show what it is they do learn.

"And what was the fact? Why, that these bad doctrines did not occupy one page to one hundred of the books used at Maynooth." This is an argument, which I must say rather surprises me, because if bad principles are really taught in any book in one, two, three or four pages, and if they are not mitigated, or denied, or condemned in any other part of the book, it stands to common sense that they, and none other, must be the genuine principles of that book. But I challenge all the professors of Maynooth to show that these doctrines are contradicted or mitigated in any other part of their volumes. It is impossible for them to bring any standard of any Papal college in Europe, in dogmatic or moral theology, in which these principles do not constitute the only doctrines taught upon the subject.

This statement, moreover, is not the fact. I have here a volume, part of a set, of the *Controversial Theology of Bellarmine*; and I have a volume of Reiffenstuel on canon law. In this last, I find from page 184 to 196, "Of the toleration of heretics" (showing that they are by no means to be tolerated); from page 197 to 203, "Of the spiritual punishments of heretics;" from page 203 to 208, "Of the temporal punishments to be inflicted upon heretics" (showing that they ought to be burned). That is a Maynooth standard; and this is more than one page in a hundred. This is the canon law, selected and published by the present Pope, the year (or the year after) he ascended the papal chair.

Here is the other book—Bellarmine. I find book III. "Of laics or seculars." Three points are laid down. "About the third there are two other questions: 1. Whether the care of religion belongs to the magistrate; whether he can permit that any one should believe as he please, or whether

a magistrate ought to punish heretics judged and condemned by the Church, as well in their books as in their faculties, and in their persons, even unto death (*usque ad mortem*)." That is published at Rome by the Pope; the publication began in 1835, and ended in 1840; and it is a standard of Maynooth.

Here is another book—*De la hogue De Ecclesia*; I read from page 225. "We take our last example from the formulary, by which the council of Constance, held in the year 1418, commands those to be questioned, who are suspected of the errors of Wickliffe or John Huss—whether they believe that the condemnations of Wickliffe, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, passed on their persons, books and documents by the sacred general council of Constance, were rightly and justly made, and to be believed and firmly asserted as such by every Catholic? Also, whether they believed, held and asserted, that John Wickliffe, John Huss and Jerome of Prague were heretics, and to be named and reputed as heretics, and that their books and doctrines were, and are, perverse; which books and which doctrines may be condemned by the sacred council as heretical?" This is the extract made by this author, from the formulary of Constance; but the author adds his own opinion in these words: "Therefore the Council of Constance commands every one who would be accounted a Catholic, to condemn the books of heretics not less than their doctrines; *yes, and their persons also*; lest under the pretext of excusing persons so notoriously heretical, their errors also might be defended."

Now here is an author not selected from the range of Romish theology, and containing some objectionable opinions which are not taught in the College of Maynooth, as this noble and learned Lord has asserted; but here is a professor of this College, who composes a book for the College. He takes the Council of Constance, and he makes the assertion of the propriety, not only of condemning the doctrines, but of burning the persons of heretics, the characteristic of every genuine Catholic; and this is compiled for Maynooth—this is the doctrine of the professor of the College written for Maynooth, in the class book which every student is compelled to purchase. How unacquainted with the subject must the noble and learned lord be, who ventures to assert, that the doctrines of intolerance or persecution are not taught at Maynooth!

But the noble and learned Lord especially mentioned documents quoted in Parliament, namely, the Commentaries on the Scriptures by Menochius and Maldonatus. Does he mean to say, that these—the Commentary of Menochius, which the student is obliged to buy, and which refers

him to Maldonatus—are not taught as the principles of the Scriptures to the students at Maynooth? In the second article of the Creed, every priest swears—"I admit the Holy Scriptures according to that sense, which our holy mother, the Church, has held, and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the sense and interpretation of Scripture; nor will I ever take or interpret them otherwise, than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers." The professor swears that, and the interpretation which he gives to the students of Maynooth, is that of Menochius and Maldonatus. If this be not proof, that these doctrines are taught in Maynooth, I know not where proof is to be found. It is in vain to think of proof, or principles, or evidence, or justice, if the plainest proofs that language and fact can give, are to be disowned and rejected, for the sake of excusing such an iniquitous system as that of the College of Maynooth.

But here is the Bible circulated through Ireland by the first bishop who pledged himself to the pope to teach the doctrines of Thomas Aquinas, in conjunction with twelve other bishops, as the infallible interpretation of the Church of Rome, which was to guide the Roman Catholics in the way of salvation. Here is one of the notes in that Bible, published under the sanction of Dr. Troy, the president of Maynooth College, and other prelates. "The good must tolerate the evil, when it is so strong that it cannot be redressed without danger or disturbance of the whole Church; otherwise, where ill men, be they heretics or other malefactors, may be punished or suppressed, without disturbance and hazard of the good, they may, and ought, by public authority, either spiritual or temporal, to be chastised or executed." [Matthew xiii. 29.] Such is the interpretation given as the infallible interpretation of the Church, and circulated throughout Ireland by the Roman Catholic bishops, from the year 1810 to this very hour.

I shall not trespass longer on your time by the citation of other documents. But I would ask, if these books are not taught in the College of Maynooth, why is it, that when the priests leave the College, they are taught in their conferences, and these same principles are inculcated in those books, which they are obliged to have, to teach them to guide the consciences of the people? Why, after the year 1829, when Protestant England opened her constitution to the Church of Rome, what was the first act that the bishops of the Church of Rome perpetrated in Ireland? The Theology of Duns was republished by them, or under their authority, for the instruction of the priests, in guiding the people; and to that Theology was added a code of

canon law, in which all the worst decretals of the Church of Rome, the decretals for the condemnation of heretics, the decretals for the subversion of thrones, the decretals for the restitution of property, and in fact all the bulls of the popes, the existence of which those bishops had denied upon their oaths in order to obtain admission to political power, were published under their authority in Ireland; so that Ireland at this moment is not under the laws of England, but under the laws of Rome. And the system of these conferences, this system of instruction for the people and the priests, the system of canon law set up by the bishops of Ireland—this it is, which it is now proposed to incorporate with the laws of England, and to endow by the authority of the British Parliament.

It is a marvellous fact, which I am going to assert, but it is the melancholy fact, that the noble and learned lord, on whose comments I have presumed to animadvert, is ignorant of the very last thing, that it could enter into the mind of man, to charge him with not knowing; he is ignorant of law. What! you exclaim; Lord Brougham ignorant of law! what law can Lord Brougham be ignorant of? He is ignorant of the law that rules a great part of her Majesty's empire; not of the laws of England, but of the Papal laws, which have been substituted for them in Ireland, and under which the whole Roman Catholic population of Ireland is at this moment ruled. If he were not so, it would be wholly impossible, that he could stand up in his place in Parliament, and not demand an inquiry into the system of the College of Maynooth.

I do not want, for one, to deprive the Roman Catholics of any advantage which can justly be afforded them. If I had the privilege or the power of dealing with Ireland, it would not be a paltry sum of a few thousands a year I should give to them; I would give to the Roman Catholics of Ireland hundreds of thousands a year, to improve their condition, and to make them happy. But I would not give a farthing to enslave them; I would not give a farthing to those, who shut out the light of God's eternal truth from the souls of my countrymen. I could not be guilty of the awful iniquity of teaching men at the public expence, to instruct the people in a novel creed, that never was heard of till the year 1564. I could not be guilty of the crime of training men in a system of perjury—a system of anti-social, intolerant, persecuting iniquity. I could not dare, as the servant of my Sovereign, to support a system that aims at the subversion of that Sovereign's throne—confessedly and avowedly aims at it, in the standards and documents taught in this College of Maynooth.

And therefore I cordially rejoice in the convention that I see before me, prepared to approach the throne of our gracious Sovereign, and address her on this important subject. We are to remember, indeed, that in our constitution the ministers of the Crown are those who must be responsible, and who alone can be accountable, as they really are the agents of the political acts of the Sovereign; and therefore we cannot justly deceive ourselves with the idea, that those who have forced this bill through the Parliament, will advise our most gracious Sovereign to answer the prayer of this petition; but although we may not expect that, I trust it will only fill the hearts of her faithful, loyal Protestant subjects with a greater devotion to the throne, and lead them through the length and breadth of the empire to rally round that throne, and to exercise their privilege when the time shall be given them to return men who also will rally round that throne, and advise her to maintain inviolate the Protestant constitution of England. And I do trust, and I do believe, that if this bill shall pass the British Parliament, the day is not far distant, when that Parliament shall inquire into the principles taught in the College of Maynooth, and see that it is its indispensable duty, and necessary to the existence of the laws and liberties of England, not only to reform that College, but to prevent by law such doctrines being taught in any part of her Majesty's dominions. For it is the duty of Parliament, to protect the civil and religious liberties of the subject; it is the duty of Parliament, to prevent crime, and, if possible, to prevent a public school of sedition, for teaching (for instance) the principles of Ribandism; and therefore Parliament is called upon to prevent, instead of endowing, a system which in my soul I believe to be the nurse and fountain of all the political and civil crimes of Ireland. It is wholly impossible, that a poor population, who believe their immortal souls depend upon the absolving power of their priests, and whose consciences are to be guided by those priests, should be instructed in such a system as this, and be free from the crimes that, I am sorry to say, deface and degrade my country.

Yesterday a document was put into my hands, which I really think it important to read; for depend upon it, the time is rapidly advancing, when this noxious tree shall produce its fruit; and I fear, from the bottom of my soul, that that fruit will be a system of war and of bloodshed, through at least the land of Ireland. You may have seen an account of a meeting in Dublin, to mock the laws of England, to turn them into ridicule; on the anniversary of the day when the authority of

those laws was asserted, by putting the leading agitator into prison, that leading agitator was paraded in state in the Rotunda, a sort of regal levee attending on him, to congratulate him on trampling upon British law. Here is the close of his address on that occasion:—"I call upon the old to countenance the juvenile exertions—I call upon sturdy manhood to stand forward in defence of fatherland—I call upon all men, of all parties, of all ages, to stand together, shoulder to shoulder, and to combine in the effort to circulate the moral electricity of public opinion throughout the land, until that electricity becomes so powerful as to make resistance impossible, and our triumph inevitably certain. What country ever held so proud a position as Ireland now holds? What country was ever engaged in such a struggle? We were the first country to prove to the world this glorious proposition, that the amelioration of human institutions may be accomplished by peaceful and constitutional agencies. I am the first apostle of that sect of politicians, who hold that by truth and reason, and through the means of public opinion being brought to bear upon the judgment of men, a more glorious triumph may be achieved, than any that could be accomplished by the sword. Long have I preached the doctrine, that the progress of society, the amelioration of our institutions, and the restoration of our domestic government, may be secured by such means. Oh! I feel delighted in my mind in the demonstration that this day has been made; and every hour that passes makes me still more confidently assured in the hope of complete and immediate success. Yes, my friends, we shall live to see the day when our Parliament shall be re-established in Collegegreen. Yes, we will ourselves make the comparison, and, taking up the words of the poet, we will exclaim—

"Look, then, abroad through nature, to the range
Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;
And speak, O man! does this capacious scene
With half that kindling majesty dilate
Thy strong emotions, as when Brutus rose
Reluctant from the stroke of Cæsar's fate
Amid the crowd of patriots, and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove,
When guilt brags down the thunder, called aloud
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
And bade the father of his country hail!
For, lo! the tyrant prostrate in the dust,
AND ROME AGAIN IS FREE!"

If this be peace, if these be the counsels of peace, then what is war?

I shall conclude by quoting what the noble and learned Lord has said, in endeavouring to vindicate the doctrines of Maynooth from the charge of being persecuting; or rather, the professors of Maynooth, for he admits the fact as to the doctrines. "It was not right to suppose that the Roman Catholic Church was the only one that had fallen into these grievous errors,

or that intolerance was confined to that Church. It was a melancholy consideration, but one to which all ecclesiastical history bore witness, that in proportion as any Church was armed with power—not spiritual, but secular power—so there had been in Churches so situated a tendency to persecute other sects. And then he says, "Thomas Aquinas has been a persecutor, who he should like to know, was one John Calvin?" The noble and learned lord has then given a story, of which I can only say, that I have not seen a similar one, of the death of Sorvetus, and he has asserted that in Calvin's writings the doctrines of persecution are vindicated. It may be so. I have not seen them in any of Calvin's writings that I have read but I do not presume to contradict the noble and learned lord. But thus I will say that I do not wonder that Calvin did hold doctrines of persecution. Why did he hold them? He was educated in a college like the College of Maynooth. And so were all our Reformers, and the only wonder is, that the light of God's truth so speedily emancipated their minds from those abominable doctrines, and brought them to understand that the kingdom of God is not to be maintained by cruelties, that it consists in 'righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.'

The noble and learned lord has ventured to quote as an example of persecuting doctrine the damnable clauses of the Athanasian Creed: "this is the Catholic faith which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved. But he has fallen into a very great and fundamental error, when he attempts to identify the denunciation of those who hold not God's truth by the ministers of that truth with the persecuting doctrines of Rome. What is the business of a minister of God's truth—a minister of the everlasting Gospel? What is his commission, and what his office? "Son of man I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die: and thou givest him not warning nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. What is the duty of every Christian minister to whatever denomination he may belong? To declare God's righteous judgments against those who deny the truth of God. If God's blessed commission to us is to 'preach the Gospel to every creature,' when He tells us—"he that be-

lieveth and is baptised, shall be saved. He that believeth not, shall be damned" and if we proclaim the great salvation that is in our blessed Lord and Master, we must proclaim the awful fruit of rejecting "the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. But here is the difference. We denounce falsehood in doctrine, we denounce guilt in practice, but how do we denounce it? We turn men to the Word of God; we call on them to search the Word of God. We do not pronounce it on our own authority, we do not dare to say, for the Established Church, that she has the right of pronouncing condemnation on any man; we do not presume to judge any man by the authority of the Church but we testify God's truth and we call on every man to judge by that truth and to judge for his own soul as he shall stand before the living God. But the Church of Rome denounces a man not because he rejects God's truth but because he does not submit to her authority. Here is one of the class books of Maynooth, written for the College in which the author states that if any man, separated from the Church of Rome and rejecting her authority, were not only to believe in (just but) to believe in Christ that he would become a martyr for Christ's sake all that it could do for him (since he did not submit to the Church) would be that he should be more tolerably punished in hell. That is the doctrine of burnt upon the subject and therein is the difference between the liberty and freedom and righteousness of Protestantism in referring men to God's Word, and the guilt and iniquity and tyranny of the Church of Rome which claims authority over every baptized man and that he is to be punished (condemned and executed) if he dares to resist her authority. Therefore the noble and learned lord made a lamentable mistake when he attempted to identify the principles of the Church of England with the dark and desolating tyranny of the Church of Rome.

And now I can only add that I rejoice at last to read, that the noble and learned lord professes Protestant principles. I rejoice to see that he testifies his gratitude to "the glorious pious and immortal memory of William the Third. I only mourn to think on the lamentable inconsistency, (arising as I think, I have proved from ignorance of the facts,) of a man praising 'the glorious pious and immortal memory of William the Third,' who rescued us from Popery and slavery, and yet using his great talents to plead, and his high position as a legislator to endow, that damnable system of Papal slavery.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. LORD WRIOTHESLEY RUSSELL, M.A.

PREACHED AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BLOOMSBURY, ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON,
JUNE 8, 1845.

"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."—Matthew ix. 36—38.

THAT portion of the Gospel narrative, to which my text refers, brings a most affecting incident before our eyes. May God's Holy Spirit cause it to reach our hearts!

We hear of the Redeemer, in the prosecution of His work of love, "going about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people." Multitudes flocked around Him; attracted by the fame that had gone abroad of the gracious words He spake, and of the wondrous cures He wrought, many came from all sides to see and hear this new prophet, that had arisen among them. As Jesus passed along, He saw the vast concourse that had gathered around Him; He beheld the multitudes. And that single glance brings with it a lesson, that never should be forgotten; it tells us, that the Saviour of man could not even look upon an assemblage of human beings without realising their necessities, and feeling for their wants. It may have been an idle, nay, a vicious throng; mere curiosity may perhaps have brought many to the place; and it is not improbable, that but few either sought or expected any real benefits; but Jesus knew their need of that which He alone could bestow, and their very ignorance and helplessness moved His pity. This is the disposition we need. Could we but see a kindred spirit prevalent among us, there would be an lack of hearty zeal in the service of God. Every member of the body of Christ would be active; every work of love would meet its due support.

My office to-day is to call your attention to the National Schools of this parish, and to endeavour to arouse your interest in behalf of a work, of which every day

shows us more and more the importance and the value—that of a religious education, based upon the pure Word of God. Can I do this more effectually, than by setting before you the mind that was in Christ Jesus?—than by endeavouring to exhibit Him as the true source, as well as the perfect pattern of compassionate love?

May God by His Holy Spirit be with us; and teach us to love, and dispose us to imitate, the example He has given us in His beloved Son!

Let us, first of all, consider the spectacle, that met our Lord's view. We are told, that He beheld a multitude "scattered" and "fainting."

Many, doubtless, had come from far. Wearied by the journey, faint from want of nourishment, these poor wayfarers were scattered up and down, seeking for refreshment and repose. The Lord saw stretched before Him an enfeebled and exhausted throng. But He saw something more than this. Under His omniscient glance there stood confessed many a bewildered mind, and many an aching heart.

When our Lord appeared upon earth, it was a period of much spiritual and moral darkness. The authorised expounders of God's Word had slumbered at their posts. Their teaching was eminently defective. Some, ignorant of the spiritual nature of the law of God, "went about to establish" a legal righteousness; they taught the doctrine of human merit. Others, professing the warmest zeal for the revealed will of God, "made it of none effect" by their own unauthorised additions; they magnified tradition, as of equal authority with the Word of God. On the other hand, among the Sadducees undisguised scepticism and open infidelity

abounded by demanding assent to that that was unsupported by the authority of the Word of God, the Scribes had driven many, by a natural reaction, to reject revelation altogether. And it is indeed impossible to wonder, that when the waters of life were thus poisoned at their very source, all the evils of the human heart should have burst forth with fearful violence and buried the land. Iniquity, did, in truth, "abound," and sin never comes alone. If the Jews were at this time an ungodly people, they must of necessity have been an unhappy people also. Many a heart amidst that multitude must have been groaning under the burden which it could not bear, whilst it knew not where to turn for relief. And He who looked upon them, "knew what was in man," when we are told that our Lord "saw the multitude, scattered and fainting," we must believe that He saw every thing that was erroneous in belief, or sinful in practice among the great assemblage.

It must, I think give additional weight to the lesson our Lord was pleased to teach to remember that when He gave this lesson of Christian duty, He condescended to place Himself in precisely the position, which every one of His people is called to occupy. He stood there as a man looking upon men. God has placed us, my brethren, in a world teeming with human beings. Your lines are fallen in a densely peopled portion of a mighty city, whose population and whose extent are among the wonders of our age. We cannot tread its streets, we cannot cross the threshold of our homes, we cannot mingle with our fellow-creatures, without being reminded that we dwell amongst a great multitude. No one can shut his eyes to the fact; let no one dare, in selfish apathy to refuse to contemplate their condition.

And what does He first, the most casual glance tell us? They are "scattered abroad." The Bible tells us of a strait road, of a sure guide, of a safe fold, of a happy home. Need I say, that that road leads us, by faith in a crucified Redeemer from death to life, from sin to holiness, from Satan to God, that that guide is the Word, which He has given to be "a light unto our feet, and a lantern to our paths"—that Word which, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, imparts light to the blinded, wisdom to the simple and which shall save "the wavering man, though a fool, from erring in the path of life that that fold

is the Church of Christ on earth, the blessed company of all faithful people, that that happy home is the glorious kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whence there is no going out, and where all is light and holiness and joy for evermore." But the Bible tells of no other way, than faith in Jesus Christ, it recognises no other guide, than God's Word and God's Holy Spirit, it makes known no other place of safety and of rest, than that blessed abode purchased by a Saviour's blood for His redeemed people; it declares no other name whereby we must be saved, but only the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And can we say that the great multitudes, who people this vast city, are as a body travelling this road, looking to this guide, desiring and hasting unto this rest? Hear the word of the prophet "All ye, like sheep have gone astray, ye have turned every one to his own way." Infidelity, profaneness and vice are the 'ways' which thousands have chosen. Man without the Bible, following the devices of his own vain heart, must needs wander far from the narrow way we know not what may be the line he may choose but we do know what must be the end of his errors.

And are these poor wanderers happy? Again let Scripture answer "They have made them crooked paths, whose evergeth therein shall not know peace. Go to the dwelling of the godless man and witness the truth of this inspired declaration. See the misery, the unutterable wretchedness, that vice indulged brings upon him and his family. They are bowed down, crushed, perishing, they are 'fainting.'" And even where some degree of moral restraint is observed, amongst decent and well ordered families, sorrow will enter. Sickness and death make sad many a dwelling, and desolate many a heart, where the true source of consolation is unknown. No wonder, that they "faint" under this load of misery. And go a little further are those who have some sense of responsibility, certain fearful misgivings of sin and death and judgment to come, and who yet know not how sin may be pardoned, how death may be deprived of its sting, how the terrors of the judgment day may be overcome. They know that they are hastening to the grave every day brings them nearer to the unseen world, they stand upon its brink under a heavy weight of unpardoned sin, they "faint" under the anticipation and

then come blind, painful efforts, struggles in the dark. They fly to some refuge; they will repent and reform; they must do something to save their souls; they resolve to exert all their might; it shall be the effort of a giant. But the strength is their own, and the heart sinks to find it utterly ineffectual; they "faint" still. And then perhaps false teachers are listened to. Recourse is had to the countless devices of man's superstition—fastings, and penances, and long unmeaning prayers, and painful efforts to subdue self and to mortify sin. But sin and self can be subdued by one weapon—the power of the name of Jesus; and never will the awakened soul find relief from any other source than that.

What a spectacle is here! Multitudes of immortal beings, fainting under the miseries of life, fainting with the prospect of eternity, fainting under those woes which we have the means to alleviate, fainting in that darkness which it is in our power to dispel.

In order to set before us more clearly the state of this destitute crowd, we are told of a comparison which their situation suggested: they were "as sheep having no shepherd." This figure conveys at once the idea of destitution, of defencelessness and of danger; and it also suggests one principal cause of this sad condition. They had no shepherd. The shepherd's office is to supply the sheep with food, to guide them into the fold, to guard it from danger; and amidst the perils of countries less favoured than our own, the good shepherd must be ready to lay down his life for the sheep. If these were wanderers in the wilderness, it was because there was no one at hand to "make them lie down in green pastures," if they were "scattered abroad," it was because they had no shepherd to guide them into the true fold. There is something in this comparison most humiliating to the pride of man; it speaks of such utter impotence to provide for our own safety, to ward off dangers, or even to discover for ourselves the way of safety. But to the true Christian it is fraught with unspeakable comfort, because it must remind him of Him, who has undertaken to perform all these offices on his behalf.

In making these remarks, I trust that I am simply following out the import of this passage now before us; but there is some danger, lest we begin inensibly to consider the whole subject as an ingenious allegory, and overlook the awful reality of this important truth. We

talk of helplessness and of danger; God give us grace to remember that which must be known and felt, or we perish everlastingly! Man's reason, great as the gift is, and mighty in God's hand for its destined end, never has, and never could discover to any human being the way to God, the means of acceptance with Him; it is the special object of the revealed Word, to make it known. Man's obedience never has, and never can be sufficient to purchase heaven, or to make him meet for glory; the atonement of Jesus Christ once offered has procured the one, the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ effects the other. The dangers to which we are exposed, are numerous and great; our foes are formidable and mighty. Satan, who lies in wait for souls, "as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour;" his devices are subtle, his watchfulness never failing, his malice insatiable. Our own corrupt hearts, and our own evil natures are against us. The world is a powerful auxiliary to our foes; and our strength to resist is perfect weakness. Well for us, when we feel it to be so, and learn to cry for help to One that is mighty.

Our blessed Lord, while jealously asserting His own sole title to the office of the good Shepherd, is still pleased to carry on the work of the salvation of souls by human instruments. He sends His servants to make known the message of mercy, to gather His people into one, and to minister to them "the cup of salvation." The destitution of the people may, then, be ascribed, in the language of man, to the want of human instruments.

Having thus spoken of the condition of the multitude, which our Lord looked upon, we have now to consider His feelings towards them.

He was "moved with compassion." Very affecting is the language here used; it tells of no ordinary sympathy. It is not the pity we sometimes bestow on a sight of woe, which comes and goes like a bubble on the stream, but a deep and earnest feeling, which stirred the very depths of that Divine heart. Let me dwell, for a few moments, on this part of my subject.

We say that we feel for the wants of our fellow-creatures, and to a certain extent perhaps we do, but we want to have these feelings extended and deepened. We contribute to charitable objects, and we subscribe to charitable institutions; but we do not mourn for the afflictions of the afflicted; we do not grieve over the

errors of the erring, as the psalmist did when he said, "rivers of waters flow down mine even, because men keep not Thy law." And this defect makes our charity the cold and perfunctory thing it too often is. It does not spring from a lively compassion. We hear almost as much of what our Lord felt for sinners, as of what He did for them. Before we are told that He restored the widow's son to his weeping mother, we are told that "He had compassion on her." At the grave of Lazarus the Saviour's tears were mingled with those of the bereaved family. The sight of Jerusalem made Him think of the woes, that were coming upon its guilty inhabitants; and "when He beheld the city, He wept over it." The Holy Ghost has seen fit to record not only the gracious acts of our Lord, but also the compassionate emotions which prompted Him. What a rebuke is here conveyed to the selfish hardness of these hearts of ours!

But the pity of our Lord did not confine itself to feelings alone; He gave a command to His disciples—a command which is as binding upon us, if we are His disciples indeed, as it was on Peter and John. "Pray for them," He said, and doubtless, by this simple injunction He did more for benighted sinners, than if He had commanded an instantaneous effusion of the Holy Spirit upon all that assembled multitude. An obligation was then laid upon the Church of Christ of which we would fain hope it has never been utterly unmindful. At the same time a great truth was declared that He who is the Lord of the harvest can alone raise up labourers for the work.

The change of figure at this place is very remarkable, nor can we of course suppose it undesigned. Our Lord does not say—Pray for shepherds for these sheep: but—Pray for labourers to be sent into this harvest. Two things we may, I think, notice in this change.

The multitude here added is somewhat more comprehensive than the former one. The pastoral office would seem more especially to designate the appointed ministers of God's Word; "labourers" for His harvest, includes all who in any way are interested or employed in making known the will of God, and inculcating the truths of the Gospel. Ministers and catechists, whether at home or abroad, schools and school teachers, dis-

trict visitors and Scripture readers, are all "labourers" in the harvest. And for the due supply of these men of God, strong in faith, fervent in prayer, mighty in the Scriptures, taught of the Spirit, full of love to God their Saviour and full of compassion towards their fellow-creatures, we are bound to pray continually. And surely it need not add, that it were an utter perversion of the very design of prayer, a profane mockery of God, to profess to pray that these blessings may be extended to our neighbours, without joyfully and liberally supporting every effort made to secure them.

Very great, say Christian brethren, are the privileges, that through God's mercy we enjoy: God's house to receive, God's Word to enlighten, God's sacraments to comfort us. To you who faint under the heavy burden of your manifold corruptions, and scarce dare dream of rest, how welcome does the gracious invitation sound—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!" You who have tasted sorrow, and found your consolation in Christ; you who have been harassed by the temptations of Satan, and have found your safety in Christ; you who have trembled to meet God as a Judge, till you have known Him a reconciled Father in Jesus Christ,—oh! rejoice in your mercies, thank God for the good gifts He has bestowed, and draw more and more water from "the wells of salvation." And remember, there are others, whom sorrow wounds, and sin ensnares, and Satan harasses, and death alarms, and judgment terrifies, as they once did you. They must find their peace where you have found yours—in that knowledge which the Bible teaches, the knowledge of Jesus Christ, as the Saviour of all who put their trust in Him. Convey, then, that knowledge to them; and pray God to make it effectual to the salvation of many souls.

There is one other idea involved in the allusion to the harvest here—the necessity of dispatch. It is a work, that may not be deferred. "Thrust in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe." Begin, then, at once to labour: labour for the salvation of your own souls—for the salvation of the souls of others. Labour "while it is called to-day; the night cometh, when no man can work."

A SERMON, BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A.

PREACHED AT CAMDEN CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
JUNE 15, 1845.

"Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto the Lord, and He shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king."—1 Sam. xii. 16, 17.

To stain the glory of all human pride, and to allow no flesh to boast itself in the presence of its Maker, is the great moral of sacred story. Man retains too much of his mould and faculties Divine, to overlook his own vast superiority over the rest of creation; but he has lost so much, that he often overlooks God's measureless superiority over him.

Hence it arises, that the Almighty is so often left out of sight in the plans and purposes of His creatures; or, at all events, that He is only so far recognised as the acknowledgment may redound to the greater glory of self, and raise that shining idol to a brighter pedestal than it occupied before. Does God leave us in the undisturbed enjoyment of a prosperity, arrived at by means, which we should be sorry to own, and thankful to forget? We immediately fancy He is smiling on our un sanctified plans, and passing by, unavenged and unrequited for, an affront put upon His own laws. Nay, does He appear to bless us with even greater success, according as we throw off the restraints of that inward monitor, whose spiritual verdicts we had once deemed to be a faithful echo from the skies? Then, we say.—"Surely, this guide must have been all along betraying us, terrifying us with imaginary penalties; had God been angry with us, He had not delayed His coming until now, or permitted us to have been prosperous so long. But no doubt, His silence is approval; vengeance delayed must be vengeance remitted." And thus "because judgment against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of

the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil."

It is a striking illustration of the folly of putting our own constructions on the silence or non interference of Almighty God, which is presented in that portion of Jewish history, which has been brought before us in the first Lesson of the day; and on which, without regard to any formal divisions, we propose to offer a few practical reflections.

The precise time at which the chapter takes up the history, is immediately after the solemn inauguration of Saul, as king over Israel.

Samuel was now growing old. Long and faithfully had he sustained towards a discontented people the arduous offices of lawgiver, judge and prophet—offices in which the strength of Jehovah had been his confidence, and the wisdom of the Most High had been his guide. Painfully, therefore, did the good man feel an implied suspicion, cast upon the integrity of his government, when the elders of Israel, gathering themselves together, said unto him, "Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us, like all the nations." Samuel, however, knew what was his only refuge on such occasions; he "gave himself unto prayer." He asked wisdom of God, who, as usual, "gave him liberally, and upbraided not." For, said the Lord unto Samuel, "hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they have said unto thee," for in the sinful request they have preferred to-day, "they have not rejected thee, but they have

rejected Me, that I should not reign over them;" "howbeit" when thou grantest their request, forget not to "protest" against this rejection of My Divine authority, "and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them."

Accordingly, we find the holy seer warning the infatuated nation of the consequences which should result to them from the curse of a granted prayer, telling them that the king whom they should choose, would make smiths of their sons, slaves of their daughters, spoils of their oliveyards, and a prey of their flocks, till they would be brought to see the folly of their sinful choice, and would betake themselves once more to the Lord their God. But, added the venerable prophet, in words which, long after the tongue which uttered them had been silent in the grave, must have come back fresh to their remembrance "but the Lord will not hear you in that day," He will leave you to seek the guides and the leaders whom ye have chosen, that they may deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

Presumption and infatuation, however, still swayed their counsels. "The people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." Accordingly, by an immediate revelation from heaven, the prophet is directed to lay upon a young man, named Saul, as the anointed of God over His people, to whom, whilst in search of his father's asses, the prophet is instructed to make the offer of the kingdom.

And here we may note a striking illustration of that peculiarity in the arrangements of Providence, by which a combination of seeming casualties becomes subordinated to the purposes of the Almighty, and chance is made a minister, to effectuate and put ~~on~~ His will. For, observe, Saul had been appointed, in the eternal decrees of Heaven, to take charge of the new kingdom; the appointment had been absolutely notified to him, and confirmed by the anointing of the prophet, and yet, for all this, lots are to be cast, to determine who the new king should be. But in "casting the lot into the lap," man has done all that he can do, "the disposing thereof" rests "with the Lord," and nothing can hinder, but that this lot shall find out the right person.

Human contingencies are Divine certainties. All chance is only unseen design. God marshals accidents, as man originates plans, save only, that the plans may fail of their intended aim, whilst the accidents never can.

By the direction of Samuel, therefore, the people proceed to the lot; and Saul, the son of Kish, one who, "from his shoulders upward was higher than all the people," was formally elected king. At sight of their chosen monarch, the people "rejoiced greatly." His very stature was to them a pre-~~age~~ of his future greatness, and the coming glory of their kingdom. Fond dreamers! to expect that God's blessing would follow on an act of disobedience, or that He would put honour on an affront which had been offered to His own authority!

A granted prayer, my brethren, is not always a sanctioned prayer, and it will be time enough to rejoice in the blessing we have been seeking for, when we find that "the Lord addeth no sorrow with it." "The prayer of the wicked" is often turned "into sin," and the prayer of the impatient is almost sure to be turned into misfortune. God does exercise His authority over our lives, and He claims to exercise it over our desires as well. He forbids all presumptions wrestling with the course of His own providence, all usurpations of His right to shape, direct and regulate all our plans of life. Why is every thing to be "according to our minds?" On what eminence can we place ourselves, from which they can take in all the obstacles and difficulties, which lie along our path? How often are we disappointed in the near approach to an object, which, in the long perspective, seemed to have every thing to attract and charm! And yet we would fain choose our own path. We would set up ourselves as infallible judges of what may be best and happiest for us. We judge of the fruit by its appearance, and not by its taste, we are satisfied with the breadth of the way, and never think of the end of the way. We would have a king, like the nations, to reign over us, and forget that "the Lord our God is our king."

Learn, then, my brethren, to tremble at your own success, whenever your impatient anxiety for some temporal good has, as it were, turned the channels of Divine Providence out of their usual course,

when you have, so to speak, coerced the Almighty into a concession, which the whole aspect of His providences indicated His intention to keep back. If the door does not open of its own accord, you must not force it. The concession, sooner or later, must be fatal to you. In letting you have your own way, God has only laid down the sceptre, to take up the sword; He has loosened "the cords of love," but it is to bind you with fetters of iron. He has given you a king, to lead you to the battles; but He will no longer "go forth with your armies," or crown your endeavours with victory.

And be not sure that His presence is with you, even though, for a time, success should appear to be on your side. Israel beheld their new king, bearing himself triumphantly over all their foes; the shout of victory was heard in their streets, and the plains of Gilgal bore witness to the sacrifices of peace offerings, which they offered up before the Lord; but, alas! they who had conquered others, had not yet conquered themselves. They had made peace with their enemies, but they had not made peace with God. There was a great controversy still unsettled; and now, just as they were about to repose on the couch of an unsanctified victory, and to revel in the fruits of sin, the Lord of heaven and earth reminds them, that now it is His time to speak. Mercy must have its limits—limits, beyond which mercy would be no longer mercy, but a judicial surrender of our providential destinies to our own keeping. There is reason to fear, when, even in this life, our sin does not "find us out." When we know that we have done, and are doing, that for which the arrow of God's pursuing judgments must be flying after us, it were better for our soul's peace, that it should overtake us at once. The tardiness of its flight in time, may be only to gather its more deadly poisons for eternity. And bitter as it may be to bear God's temporal chastisements, it were better to feel them, than not to feel our own sin.

The instrument chosen of God for bearing His remonstrance to the Jewish nation, was the same venerable prophet, about whom the controversy arose; and on his account it may be, the remonstrance had been delayed until now. He would allow the mutual relations between king and people to be decreed and settled;

instructing the one in the principles of subordination, and the other in the foundation of his rule. So that now, having made a formal delegation of his own right to rule them, the prophet felt that the time was coming, when he could no longer be suspected of any interested opposition to the new form of government.

"A word spoken in season, how good is it!" How often do the arrows of the truth fall blunt and powerless upon the soul, from their not being aimed at the right time! We commonly allow the fault and the reproof to come too close together. We forget, that a little interval between them would allow the offender time to think; the offended time to cool; and both, when the grace of God should so incline them, the opportunity and time to pray. Had Samuel uttered his bold remonstrance to the Israelites, under the first keen sense of the insult they had offered him, he would probably have been answered with scorn; but having waited till they supposed he had forgotten their unkindness, he beholds them now meekly entreating for an interest in his prayers.

Brethren, such of you as are parents particularly, I would exhort you to imitate Samuel's example in this respect. The expected reproof, even in children, is seldom a profitable reproof. Pride is on the alert; conscience has taken the alarm; and the whole artillery of excuses and self-justifications are being prepared for the encounter. But let the taste of sin have time to turn bitter on the tongue; let the sense of the wrongfulness of your children's fault be heightened by the tenderness which, on your part, seems to have passed it entirely by; nay, let the time for calling them to account be that when you are showing them marks of continued kindness,—and you will then find, that pride will have nothing to answer; the convicted heart will be ashamed of its excuses; and wondering at this unexpected and undeserved forbearance, they will say with the penitent Israelites before us—"We have sinned; we have forsaken the Lord; pray for thy servants to the Lord thy God."

Brethren, I note this, because I believe, in nothing do we more require "the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove," than in administering reproofs. the harmlessness of the dove, to temper the severity of the attack; and

the wisdom of the serpent, to know when to choose the time.

And now the aged seer would quicken the people to a sense of godly sorrow, by constraining them to an open confession of their wicked conduct towards him. "Behold," said he, "I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto Me, and have made a king over you"—a king who shall supersede the claims of one, who has grown old and grey-headed in your service. For, from that memorable night, on which the voice of the Almighty woke my infant slumbers, until this very day, have I, in all godly simplicity, as a prophet, behaved myself before you. "Witness," therefore, if you can, "before the Lord: whose ox have I taken, or whose ass have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith," that ye have been thus eager to cast off my kind and paternal yoke, and to put on another yoke, which, in sorrow rather than in anger, I tell you, ye will soon find to be more than ye can bear?" And immediately the people were pricked in their hearts, and witnessed before God, that their venerable prophet had done none of these things. "Neither oppression, nor fraud, nor wrong, nor bribe," they answered, "have ever stained thy righteous government." "the Lord is witness, and His anointed is witness this day."

We are not to look upon this appeal of Samuel, as designed so much for the clearance of his own character in reference to the integrity of his administration, as for the conviction of the Israelites, on their own testimony, of ingratitude and wrong. "If I have never abused my trust, on what principle of justice have you sought to take it away? If I have carefully guarded all your rights and liberties, why place on my hoary head this crown of dishonour?"

"And yet, in truth, it is not against me that ye have done this wickedness, for then I could have borne it; but it is against that gracious Being, who 'brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.' "Stand still, therefore," and let me "reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which He did to you and to your fathers," when He "made your enemies like a wheel, as the stubble before the wind, as the fire burneth the wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire," when He "persecuted them with His tempests, and made them afraid with all His storms." Let me reason with you on your folly in casting off a leader, who had "given you rest from all your enemies round about;" on your ingratitude, in forgetting the Giver of all these graces taken—the fire and the cloud, the descending manna and the smitten rock; and all to gratify the foolish desire of being "like the rest of the nations."

Oh! brethren, how many souls have perished, from the desire to be "like the rest of the nations!" Things which men care little about for themselves, they yet desire and discountenance, because they would not displease others. They cannot pay the price of a holy singularity. They would rather "follow a multitude to do evil," than walk by themselves to do good. The world's ways, the world's principles, the world's pleasures, the world's thin and cheap Christianity are all perpetuated and sustained by the same principle, which made the Israelites to ask for a king.

"I cannot," says one, "bid adieu to scenes of vanity and folly, to the midnight revel and dramatic blasphemy, because I should be unlike all the nations." "I cannot," says another, "make arrangements to attend a second Sabbath service, or shut my friends out from the luxurious indolence of the table, because I wish to be like all the nations." "I cannot bear a witness for Christ in the world; I cannot, like David, 'return to bless my household;' I cannot, in the multiplied occupations and intercourses of life, make profession of godliness, without at the same time bearing a witness against the nations; against their principles, which are opposed to Christ; against their practice, which dishonours Christ; against the aim and scope of their whole lives, which is to reduce all spiritual religion to an empty name, and all spiritual teaching to the setting forth of unmeaning parables." No; we must be "like the nations;" we must have a king to reign over us; we must walk even as others, governed by "the prince of the power of the air," the king that fights the battles of the nations.

Brethren, conformity to the world, or friendship with the world, can only be obtained at one price—enmity with God. What, were we told this morning, was Pilate's motive for staining his hands with the life-blood of the Son of God? He was "willing to content the people."

"Yet do not argue," continued Samuel, "from what I have said to you, that this your disobedience and folly have placed you out of the pale of that merciful sovereignty, which ye have so wantonly discarded. God will not forsake you, though ye have forsaken Him. In the midst of judgment He hath remembered mercy; and "if ye will fear the Lord, and serve Him, and obey His voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord," then the Lord will be your God, and ye shall be His people. "But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers." And now, that ye may see how all heaven takes part in this mighty controversy against you, and how the Almighty will ratify the sentence of condemnation, I have just pronounced, I bid you "stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto the Lord, and He shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king."

I find that some modern travellers have controverted the strangeness of this appearance; as if the thunder-storm in summer would not be a miraculous phenomenon in Palestine. It is not necessary, however, for the purposes of a Divine attestation to Samuel's message, that the event should be improbable in itself, provided only that it were improbable at that particular time; that the sky presented no indication of the approach of such a phenomenon; because then it must have been evident to the assembled people, that in invoking the storm of rain to descend at such an unlikely moment, the prophet must have had previous assurance from the Almighty that that which he invoked would come.

"Now, therefore," said the prophet, "stand still and see." Before, he had said, "stand still and hear"—hear of "the righteous acts of the Lord" in your deliverance from exile, in your escape from oppression, in your introduction to a land which was "flowing with milk and honey." Now he says, "stand still, and see:" let the mantled sky and the lightning flash, and the opening of heaven's flood-gates bear witness to God's dis-

pleasure against you. Ordinarily, God speaks through a "still small voice;" but to-day, He will send His message by the thunder. Sooner or later you must hear Him; and the louder He raises His voice, the less does it portend of friendliness.

Oh! brethren, why is it that men will not listen to the "still small voice" of mercy?—that they will not heed the gentler reasonings of the Saviour?—that they lay their ears to the ground, whenever the low and muffled death-bell bids them prepare for their common resting-place? Oh! it is, that they are waiting for the thunder. Preaching suits not the brightness of their harvest sky; warnings grate harshly upon the ears, yet tingling with the shouts of victory. To be heard at all, the Almighty must use the tongue of the storm; the thunder's harsh and broken crack is the only sound, that will wake them from their dreams of worldly drowsiness. And then they are awake indeed. Then they are glad to throw themselves on the prayers of the meaneast of the saints of God, and like these Israelites exclaim in all that agony of soul, which seems labouring to arrest the flying moments—"Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not." "Let the vials of wrath be held up but a little longer; give us back but one of our mis-spent and desecrated sabbaths. We need no thunder to wake us now; we not only hear, but see—see the "great thing" which the Lord is going to do this day. But oh! do thou pray for us to the Lord our God, that He would "spare us, that we may recover our strength, before we go hence, and are no more seen."

But let me entreat you, my brethren, as ye would leave this world in peace, as ye would part company with your fleshly tabernacle in the hope of a joyful resurrection, do not wait for the thunder of death; hearken to the mild warnings in life and health. Listen to the calm remonstrance, which is made to you, while the sun is yet riding in the heavens, and above you, as yet, there gather no threatening clouds. Fright is a bad help to speed; and the enemy in sight, an unfavourable opportunity for laying out your plans of battle.

Hear, then, the words of the Lord—the words of Samuel, yea, the words of all the prophets; God hath ever sent to you.

They are as eloquent of mercy, as the harvest thunder was eloquent of power. "Fear not. Ye have done all this wickedness;" ye have made for yourselves a king—a king of your wealth, a king of your pleasures, a king (it may be) of your griefs and cares. But if ye will now turn aside from this folly, and serve the Lord with all your heart, following no commands but His, desiring no smile but His, depending on no righteousness but His, and no longer like the rest of the nations, trusting to those vain things which can neither profit nor deliver, rest assured, that as Samuel declared to the Israelites, "the Lord will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake."

Yes, my brethren, the glory of that great name is bound up with, and brightened and magnified by a thousand pardons. The Redeemer's brow shall be illumined with a yet brighter radiance, and angels' bosoms throb with a yet diviner joy, as each sinner that repenteth shall pass from this sanctuary to the closet, to implore that God would this day speak to his soul, not by the voice of His thunder, but by the whispers of His gentle Spirit; not by the outpourings of the harvest storm, but by that "speech which distils as the dew;" that so the wilderness of the barren heart may become fruitful, and "the desert may rejoice and blossom as the rose."

"Moreover, as for me," continued Samuel, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you." "I must plead with God for you, as well as plead with you for God. Frames and feelings, and a faltering tongue, may destroy the efficacy of my pleas with you; but my God will put honour on stammering lips; and therefore I will bear you on my heart before God. "I will teach you the good, and the right way;" the way of safety,

the way of happiness, the way whose land-marks are known by the Redeemer's footsteps, and whose end shall bring you to the Redeemer's rest. "Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth, with all your heart; for consider how great things He hath done for you."

But oh! my brethren, how much more forcibly can ministers of the Gospel use this last argument than Samuel could! "Consider what great things the Lord hath done for you." Could Samuel tell you of thirst satisfied by waters from the gushing rock? We tell you of waters, at whose taste you shall never thirst again? Did Samuel tell you of a guide, who would conduct you through the parting flood, and shape your devious wanderings by the fire and the cloud? We tell you of One who will bear you up amidst "the swellings of Jordan," and even as you "walk through the valley of the shadow of death," permit you to "fear no evil." Could Samuel tell you of a leader, who, after giving you rest from your enemies, should lead you into that good land, where grapes of Echol hung, and rivers of honey flowed? We tell you of One, who, after having put all your spiritual enemies under His feet, death with its sting, the grave with its plagues, sin with its dark and overhanging curse, has prepared for you an entrance into a land of life immortal, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest."

Oh! "consider," then, "what great things the Lord hath done for you." Done for your sins, to pardon them; for your infirmities, to help them; for your comforts, to increase them; for your souls, to redeem them. And then put to yourselves the heart-searching question—"How can we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

PROTEST AGAINST THE THIRD READING OF THE MAYNOOTH ENDOWMENT BILL. Dissentient—

1. Because I hold it to be contradictory to the first principles of the Reformation, to provide for the establishment of an order of men to be educated for the express purpose of resisting and defeating that Reformation—men whose office and main duty it will be to disseminate and to perpetuate those very corruptions of the Christian faith which the Church of England has solemnly abjured, and some of which the whole Legislature of England has declared to be superstitious and idolatrous.

2. Because the most unbounded toleration of religious error does not require us to provide for the maintenance and the growth of that error, but rather imposes upon us a strong obligation to prevent by all just and peaceful means its increase, and to discourage its continuance.

3. Because this measure has a tendency to raise in the public mind a belief that religious truth is a matter of indifference to the State; and by consequence to subvert that principle of association to the throne, which is the title of the present dynasty, and which forms an integral and essential part of the constitution of this kingdom.

E. LANDAFF.
C. WINTON.
CLANCAETTY.
C. J. LONDON.

J. B. CHESTER.
E. CANNELL, Secy.
WINCHILSEA and NOTTINGHAM.
CAROGAN.

A FAREWELL SERMON, BY THE REV. EDWARD THOMPSON, M.A.

PREACHED AT CHARLOTTE CHAPEL, PIMLICO, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
JUNE 15, 1846.

"Holding forth the Word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ; that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."—Philippians II. 16.

THE apostle's address to the Christians at Philippi was most animated and exciting. His interest respecting their spiritual welfare, appears to have been of no ordinary kind. His exhortations were most urgent, his zeal for their good most manifest, and his desire that they should "hold forth the Word of life" most palpable. St. Paul was not only anxious that the Philippians should keep the faith, but that they should hold forth the Word of life in their professions and in their actions, and not only become pleasing to him in this world, but a people over whom he might rejoice in the day of Christ, in order that he might not have run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Thus you observe, that there was with the apostle, a temporary interest, and an eternal interest; the one exciting his gratification upon what he had done, the other calling forth an anticipation of rejoicing at the second advent of the Messiah.

The allusion in our text is most beautiful; it is supposed to refer to those towers, which were built at the entrance of harbours, and on which fires were kept burning, to direct ships into the port. But there is a connection with the previous verses, which we must quote, in order to render the allusion effective. "Do all things," says the apostle, "without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life." The holy lives of the faithful were as lights, or fires, which in the early ages must have had a great influence on unbelievers, to direct them into the safe harbour of the Gospel. This is the allusion; and it appears to be both reasonable and strong.

The apostle was not only most urgent in his exhortations to the Philippians, but in all his Epistles we recognise a degree of anxiousness over converts, which betokened the great regard for that

cause, of which he was the indefatigable and zealous advocate. We see a manifestation of his miraculous power, a palpable display of superiority, and eloquence, and direct inspiration, that assure us, that he was divinely called to the ministry of reconciliation; and yet in the humbleness of his soul he declared, "that he was the least of the apostles, and was not meet to be called an apostle, because he persecuted the Church of God." But "by the grace of God," said he, "I am what I am."

It is indeed truly delightful and joyous, to perceive a happy connection between ministerial labour and congregational reception. This is a point at which we should endeavour to arrive. We should do our best to make the connection binding, and of such a nature as not to be subject to change or temporal separation. The cord of love should keep the minister and his people together in thought, in mind and affection. Indeed, he and they should be so united, as to form but one—one branch of that true apostolic Church, of which Jesus was the founder. Union in a Church is its strength. In fact, it is its life, without which it is in danger. Although there are in our Church violent controversies, and occasional distractions, yet it is most consolatory to know, that these are only carried on by the few, in comparison with the many indefatigable members of our Establishment. Among so great a body, there always will be dissatisfactions and disappointments; and in so wide a field, we must expect to see many novelties introduced, many anxious sighs after popularity, many vain and useless struggles, many hopes shattered, and many talents and much zeal perverted. Such is the ambition of man! Such is the pride of the human heart, that some are not contented with an honest emulation, and an upright working in the good old paths, but they must wander into the intricate ways of mystery, confuse the doctrines, corrupt the faith, and lead all who hear them

into a dark maze of perplexity and uneasiness. Others, again, are really so supine, and so manifestly careless of souls committed to their charge, that they really cause men to be as lukewarm and as indifferent as themselves. Others enter upon extremes, and thus attempt by harsh endeavours to gain that, which through their own incompetency, they were unable to acquire by moderate means. But how wholesome is the advice of one of the wise prelates of our Church! "There is," says he, "a middle course, equally removed from Puritanism and the errors of Popery, which we may safely follow. That middle course has been very generally adopted by our bishops and clergy since the Reformation; and from it, I hope, we shall not depart."¹

Whoever looks upon the situation of the clergy in a true and proper spirit, must acknowledge, that it is one of anxious difficulty; not simply because rectitude of conduct, consistent and virtuous character are required, an active and diligent disposition, and a desire to "do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith," but on account of the opposition of wicked men, and the rejection of the engrafted Word. When we observe such barriers as these reared, such apparently insurmountable obstacles, we almost shrink back upon ourselves; and ask, "Who is sufficient for these things?" But we find an apostle's answer, and then we take courage; and though we feel our hearts faint, our spirits depressed, and our strength absolute weakness, the answer, in the most dejected of times, brings the necessary support and encouragement—"our sufficiency is of God."

You must already have anticipated the statement I am about to make. I allude to it with pain and suffering. I am about to be removed from you to another sphere of duty, and to commit you to the care of a pastor, who, I have reason to believe, will be equally alive to your spiritual interests as I have been, and who, by God's help, will make up for my deficiencies, which, through the weakness of the flesh, must have been most apparent. This change, then, under the blessing of God, will be for your consolation, for your hope in believing, and for your joy in the Lord.

I must not conceal the fact from you, that although my labour has been great, and at times most trying, I have always

been fully rewarded, greatly encouraged, and apparently most welcome received, if I may judge from the great attention, and (may I flatter myself by saying?) the deep interest you have felt in my preaching. It is these truths, that have given me hope; it is these, that have revived my spirit when it might otherwise have sunk within me: it is these, that have gladdened and warmed my heart, when otherwise it might have grown cold towards you. Yes, these have been to me as lights, that have cheered me on through the dark passages of life; or as a beacon while sailing upon the great ocean, and led me safely within the harbour of peace.

When I first came among you, my difficulties were of the gravest character. I entered upon a Chapel, that had been for some time closed; the congregation was scattered as sheep that had no shepherd; the schools were without funds, and only existed through the kindness and voluntary assistance of a few individuals. I was told, that I never could overcome the difficulties, against which I had to contend; but the voice was human; I heeded not—I persevered; and though the effects of my labour might have been greater, it shall never be said, that I failed. Failed in a pecuniary sense, I confess I have most lamentably; but I never did look for such a reward here as the earthly treasure; my object was, to be able to "rejoice in the day of Christ," by a realization of those hopes of blessedness, which it has been my constant desire to keep alive, and to show you a prospect of a happy eternity; which, I trust, will be at the termination of every life before me. But you are the best judges: if I have been the means, by the will of the Almighty, of enforcing the great and important doctrines of our salvation—of encouraging the weak—of daunting the bold—of cheering the sorrowful, or of converting the wicked—yes, if I have ministered good to one individual, or caused even one to think of better things to come, I have reason to rejoice, yea, and will "rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." But, I trust, that many have felt the deep and important effects of the Gospel, when I have endeavoured "to hold forth the Word of life;" that not one only, but very many, have been spiritually enlivened, and have drunk deeply of those waters, whose fountains are as a well of

¹ Bishop of Rochester's Charge, October, 1813.

life, springing up into everlasting glory.

But these observations, some may say, partake of egotism. I will not grant it. A minister's health, his welfare, his labour, and all circumstances connected with him, should be mixed up in the interest of his people. Ministerial connexion should be inviolate. There should be a like interest, arising from the same engrafted principle. If one be sorrowful, the other should cheer; if one be poor, the other should endeavour to make rich; if one be depressed, the other should rejoice; and so, by mutual interest, and a regard for each other, happiness should be increased, man's hope of eternity rendered more certain, and God's glory considerably enlarged.

I desire to press upon you most urgently, the consideration of ministerial connexion. I desire you to bear in mind, that there is not a circumstance—there is not a prayer offered—not a sermon preached, not a charity advocated, but that you are, or should be, as deeply interested as your minister, as to the beneficial result. I wish to remind you of this connexion—of this relationship (for I can find no term more applicable). It is neither time nor absence, that should ever make us forget the closeness of the tie. But bear also in mind, that if there be an individual responsibility, connected with ministerial duty, there is also a congregational responsibility—an account to be given of the word received, as well as the truth delivered; and the rejoicing at the latter day will depend upon the united faithfulness of minister and people. Each has a duty to perform—the most important, as well as the most anxious; and with regard to ourselves, woe be unto us, if we do not perform it.

As then, brethren, we have had an united interest equally great on both sides, let us examine, if, during our connexion, our spiritual improvement has been great—if we have increased the entrusted talent—if the fruits of the tree have been as pure as the seed sown—in short, if the reception of the truth has been equal to the labour bestowed—if we have profited, and if God has been glorified.

Now we can only ascertain these facts by comparing one year with another, and then drawing the correct conclusion.

And, first, with respect to the attendance upon the Lord's Supper. Let us examine, by comparing numbers. On Christmas Day 1840, there were 42 communicants. On Christmas Day, 1842, there were 127 communicants,—an in-

crease of more than double. On Easter Day 1841 there were 82 communicants; on Easter Day 1843, there were 104. On Whit-Sunday 1841 there were 58 communicants: on Whit Sunday 1843, there were 102 communicants. And at the commencement of my ministry, the average number of communicants was 40; on the last Sunday I administered the sacrament, the number was 88.

Thus you observe, that there has been an increase of communicants. But has the increase been so large as it should have been? If much has been done, considerably more remains to be done. If many have been induced to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, many more are to be convinced of the efficacy and the real comfort, which that holy ordinance imparts to those who receive it worthily. Many more have yet to observe the last command of our blessed Lord—yet to obey His sovereign will, and to bring themselves under the influence and the power of the Gospel. There are many among us, who attend regularly the service of the Church, and yet depart before they have received all that the Church has in her power to bestow. And here I might remind those young people, who received from my hands admission for confirmation, what I received from them in return. Was it not a faithful promise, that they would prepare themselves to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? I do not think that that promise has been faithfully kept by some of them, I fear, but very few out of the many, have sufficiently thought of the binding necessity of that engagement. This I have to lament. But as I have shown, there has been an increase of communicants, and a regular attendance has been observed by several faithful members. Over those I have to rejoice, yea, and trust to be able to rejoice with them in the day of Christ, "that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

But I come now to say a few words upon our Schools. As I have stated, when I first became connected with them, they were without funds. At the end of the first year, there was a deficiency of £60, after the greatest exertions had been made to meet that deficiency. At the end of the second year, there was a deficiency of £20—less, you observe, by more than one half. And at the end of the following year, there was a balance of a little above £7, reducing the previous deficiency, which amounted to nearly £100, to £89. In the last year, through

the emotions of friends, of whose kindness I dare not trust myself here to speak, there was a balance of £22, which consequently reduced the deficiency to £68, and which still remains. In this, you are an interested party; and if it be the duty of those, who can afford it, to make provision for the spiritual wants of those who have need, surely it is a duty, of which you ought ever to be mindful, and regularly to perform. There is one rule that I think we should all do well to observe, namely, however large or however small our incomes may be, invariably to give a tithe of that income away in charity. And a portion of this should be given, for the purpose of imparting a religious and useful education to the poor. I talk not now of temporal advantages to be derived from the observance of such a rule, but I look for a much higher benefit, and a more welcome acceptance with God, for those who obey it. The advantage must necessarily be of an eternal, not of an earthly nature.

It is very true, that the expenditure of our schools is large; but it must be remembered, that there are five schools in number. When we look at the expenditure, we must also look, and see what really has been accomplished. Now it appears that, during the last four years, speaking collectively, no less than 800 children have been instructed at these schools; and, from the time I became connected with them, to the present, there have been most gratifying results emanating from individual labour. I take no credit to myself for the accomplishment of the facts, but I give the full meed of praise to those who have deserved it—to those who have taught the children. And if I were inclined here to bestow individual praise, I might do so to a very great extent; but I leave the reward in the hands of an all-seeing God, who is pleased with a man, who offers to the little children but a cup of water in His holy name.

And if, brethren, it be asked, what we have taught these children, I make bold to assert, that the knowledge imparted to them is not inferior, either in quantity or quality, to any other schools in the kingdom; and that as good a religious and useful education is given at our schools, as possibly can be given. If there be a doubt as to this fact, I have to invite any members of this congregation to come and judge for themselves; and if, in any department, there be the least deficiency, suggestions will readily be received for improvement, and most happily adopted.

We have other charities connected with us, such as clothing funds, and the visiting society. I especially allude to our poor fund, the object of which is to supply at Christmas the necessities of those poor, who have been in the habit of attending this Chapel. The appeal last year was liberally answered, and very much good was done, by the distribution of blankets, bread, and coals. May the same charitable spirit be exercised, when the opportunity shall be given to make the appeal.

Thus, brethren, you see, that you have opportunities of doing good to those, who meet in the same house with you for the same religious purposes—to those of the same faith—to those who are upon the same happy and blessed road; at the termination of which are joy, peace, and a happy immortality. In fact, you have it in your power, to “hold forth the Word of life;” to restore those, who are spiritually dead; to cheer the hearts of the sorrowful; and also to remove the temporal wants of those, who are pining under the severe hand of poverty, and groaning under the intolerable burden of tormenting distress, if not of absolute starvation.

The mere allusion to these scenes of distress, as well as to our schools, will partly show us, what you have to do for the future. But if you take a more enlarged view of future exertions, incumbent upon you as Christians, you will see that you have no time to lose, in evidencing that pure apostolic faith, which your Bible so urgently enforces. In regarding ministerial connexion, we must look forward. The spiritual horizon is clear and cheering; the storm has returned to the farthest corner; the gathering tempest, the threatening of foul weather, all have disappeared. We have prayed for the “peace of Jerusalem;” the blessing has descended. God has been praised; we have been comforted.

And yet we know that we are naturally poor; poor in spirit; poor in religion, poor in our capabilities to serve our God; and yet we must be made rich—not rich in this world's goods, but rich in the accumulation of the heavenly treasure—in one that shall serve us hereafter, and be joy and blessedness to the soul, when it shall leave the outer man and wing its way to glory.

Brethren, much can be done by good resolutions, and by earnest prayer. And you cannot better perform these than at the commencement of a new ministry. My successor is willing to perform his

part; will you be as willing to perform yours? Oh! how greatly do I mistake; if there are any among us, who are backward in their endeavours to increase in strength and spiritual might! The field that you have to work upon, is open for every captive to exult in liberty; for every harassed slave to throw off his shackles and rejoice in his freedom. There is a place, into which an admission can be procured "without money and without price." And on it candidates for the prize are admitted. The contention is great, I grant you. But though one may outstrip another, yet not one, that earnestly contends, shall go without a prize. The contention is superior to all others, because not one man is to go unrewarded who actually contends. Only in this spiritual contention have we hope. All other schemes are ineffectual, if not dangerous, as to our salvation; dangerous, indeed, if they be opposed to that Divine scheme, which was formed for the restoration of the human race.

Brethren, my desire is, that Israel may be saved. Israel, under the old dispensation, is what the Christians are under the new. I speak typically. The one people were designed by God to represent the other, and both to meet in the full and enriched perfection of glory. The slightest consideration of the future world, necessarily brings the mind to rejoice over the hope of living with the Lord in eternal joy, and in the sweet companionship of those, whom we now love upon the earth.

I pray for a lasting blessing. Though I may be removed to other ministerial labours, or you to other homes, it follows not that my delivery of the Word should be forgotten, or your reception should lose one single advantage. Yes, as our separation must take place here, I look for the happy union in heaven, for a spiritual connexion, that shall never be broken off. Yes; I look for a recognition of each other, for mutual blessedness, and I anticipate a rejoicing in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain neither laboured in vain. St. Paul looked forward to that day, evidently, with the certainty of seeing the objects who had called forth his labours. He did not regard any earthly reward, but looked with joy to the day of Christ, when he expected a realization of all his hopes. The text clearly gives us the idea, that we are to meet again, and that ministers are to rejoice over those, who have been

the objects of their labours. And, oh! how happy is the contemplation of a once zealous minister, amid flames and dissolution at the latter day, rejoicing over his redeemed people, and recognising them as they are led on to the Lamb on the throne, by the angelic choir as they sing the songs of triumph, and chant their Maker's praise! Oh! methinks I see, by the eye of faith, the apostle Paul at the head of a resuscitated army, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and the whole band of Christian converts, methinks I see him stripped of the mortal, and clothed in the robe of immortality, rejoicing over the spiritual throng, as the risen objects of his love assemble in countless masses to the everlasting abodes of eternity. And St. Peter, and St. John, and the other apostles, leading on their converts to the faith; and their successors, and all ministers of the Church, rejoicing over the result of their labours, and receiving from the hands of their God the happy welcome, amid the joyous display of celestial power. For them, and for all those who love the appearing of their God, there is a crown in reserve, every jewel of which will help to light up the glory of God's kingdom, and to emit immortality around the spiritualized individual who animates beneath the diadem. Brethren, the prospect is glowing. We regard it by anticipation. We look forward in hope and faith, for the realisation of the one, and the completion of the other, after we have held forth the Word of life, and finished our course with joy.

To a happy termination of life, and to the future meeting, let us look forward. Let us endeavour to go on our way rejoicing in our several stations, neither forgetting one another, nor ceasing to pray for one another; and by the memory of days gone by, and by our prayers at the throne of grace, let us rejoice, that I may not have run in vain, nor laboured in vain, and that God's Word may not have returned to Him void.

And "let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

And may the peace and love of God dwell among us all, that He may be glorified, and that we may be saved.

We do not think it necessary for us to go into the inquiry as to whether the priests of Baal were sincere in their idolatry. We observe that many writers seem almost to assume, as a point on which there could not be debate, that the priests entered unwillingly into the trial of strength with the prophet of Jehovah, conscious of the badness of their cause, and therefore anticipating only defeat. But we cannot see any fair grounds on which the assumption is made: the whole deportment of the priests appear to us to have been that of men who were in earnest. Had they been merely playing a part, with a thorough consciousness as to what the issue must be, we suspect that they would have given in sooner, and not have persevered for so many hours, at so much inconvenience. We are disposed, then, to allow them the credit of sincerity, just as we allow it to idolaters in our own day, who really, we doubt not, regard as a deity the graven image before which they bow down. And we could not go with you to a district overrun by heathenism, and observe the great abominations and enormities which superstition exacts from its votaries, without pointing out to you how emphatic a lesson should teach gather from falsehood. We are very much disposed to think that the most rigid inquiry into the claims of idolatry would bring out fragments from the huge mass of error on which might yet be seen remains of the impress of truth. We have often had occasion to observe to you how this holds good in regard of sacrifice. You shrink, and very naturally, from the sanguinary rites of Paganism, which seem to assume in the Deity a sanguinary being, who thirsts delight in the sufferings and blood of His creatures. But then, you ought also to remember that there is thus given the strongest possible testimony to the Divine manifestation of sacrifice: the savages are virtually acting on tradition, and thus attesting, in the midst of their ignorance and barbarism, that God originally revealed this great truth to man, that "without shedding of blood is no remission." But you will find, moreover, amongst the heathen an extraordinary readiness to make suffering a part of their religion to give themselves to great labours and to undergo excruciating pain, in hopes of thereby averting the anger of some imagined deity. And here again, as we believe, there is truth at the foundation of error. The Pagans are quite wrong in supposing that there can be any virtue in the penances of the devotee, which may help to procure for him favour with God; but nevertheless they are quite right in a principle which may justly be called scriptural, that they who would enter into heaven must suffer in the flesh. In the same way as when they first sacrifice they may be regarded as acting on a confused and corrupted tradition which in the slaying of typical victims, so when they lay upon the body they may be considered as having received some such precept as this of our Saviour: "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off: if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out," as having mistaken its import, but as acting honestly on their mistake, and thus setting an example to others, who may be better taught, but not as willing to obey. It is exceedingly easy to feel pity for the misguided votaries of superstition, and to speak with sorrow, not unmixed perhaps with contempt, of their vain attempts to make up by penance and affliction for offences against God. But we should really like to have it well observed that they are not so wrong in their principle as in their application of a principle. They put the sackcloth on the wrong place: they apply the scourge to the wrong part to the body in place of the soul, but they are quite right in their principle that the sackcloth ought to be worn, and that the scourge ought to be used. And let it not therefore be thought strange if we venture to affirm that many amongst ourselves have wandered further from the truth than the very heathen in the midst of their deep moral degradation. Mortification is a duty and it is the soul which is to be especially its subject. The Pagan is wrong in substituting mortification of the body for mortification of the soul; but we pray you, is he not, after all, somewhat nearer to the truth than many a professed Christian who mortifies neither?

And, assuredly, the standard with which idolaters will set on their mistakes ought to put us to the blush for the lukewarmness and cowardice which we often display in acting on our truths. It might be thought if you were to draw your conclusions from the deportment of the great mass of Christians that it had been the object of the Gospel to release men from all that rigour and all that self-chastisement which natural religion had always more or less dictated. But, on the contrary, the Gospel has only corrected erroneous notions as to what this rigour should be, and as to how the chastisement should be applied: the severest rules that were ever laid down by the Infidel deities existed not those prescribed by Christianity. What think ye of "crucifying the flesh with the afflictions and lusts?" What think ye of "keeping under the body, and bringing it into subjection?" What think ye (according to words already quoted) of "cutting off the right hand, and plucking out the right eye? Take heed, that ye deceive not yourselves. It is not without conflict, it is not without struggle, it is not without sacrifice, it is not without self-chastisement, that ye may look to be saved, and therefore question for your private, your intense consideration is, what their just are acting on the meaning of those precepts of the Gospel, which demand, under strong figures, the mortification of the flesh, and the surrender of every thing which may be a hindrance to piety.

—From a Sermon by Rev. H. McNeill

A SERMON, BY THE HON. AND REV. H. MONTAGU VILLIERS, M. A.

PREACHED AT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, BLOOMSBURY, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
JUNE 22, 1845.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."—Revelation iii. 20.

THIS is a part of our Lord's address to the Church of the Laodiceans. In the preceding verses, we find that Church described as being in a lukewarm state, its danger is also pointed out, and a warning is given—"I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." And we might certainly have expected, considering the greatness of the danger and the heinousness of the sin, that our Lord would have left this Church and given it over at once to a reprobate mind. But truly we may say, that God's ways are past finding out, for where we are most inclined to expect judgment there do we find "mercy rejoicing against judgment." So here, we find Him declaring—"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock, if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

In these words we have, first of all, the condescension of our Saviour and secondly, His promise to the faithful.

May God by His Holy Spirit be with us! May that Spirit, whose office it is to 'take of the things which are Jesus and show them unto us,' enable us so to meditate on this portion of God's Word that it may be blessed to our souls, for Jesus Christ's sake!

I. First, we have the condescension of the Saviour.

That which must strike us all, as being the leading characteristic in it, is the humility with which our Saviour is pleased to represent Himself in this description. "Behold," he says, *I stand at the door.* And who is this? It is He, that might at any moment turn to any unconverted man, and tell that man to "set his house in order, for that he shall die,

and not live." It is He, who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," it is He, who is the Sovereign of all sovereigns, "King of kings and Lord of lords,"—it is He, who came down to be a man, and who repudiates Himself now as condescending to wait upon sinners, saying, "I stand at the door, and knock." It is a great thing, if one that is merely flesh and blood like ourselves, should offer to do us a kindness, if we be but strangers to him, but how much greater is the love and condescension of our Redeemer, who looks upon us as those who were His enemies by birth, His enemies by wicked works, and yet declares—"I stand at the door and knock!"

But I do not dwell merely upon the humility implied in the very fact of His coming, I look also at the special description which is given of Him here, as being in a waiting posture, '*Behold, I stand at the door.*' How God has stood at our doors, my brethren! Perhaps there are hundreds of souls in this house of prayer to-night to whom I am permitted to speak, who, if they were to declare their own past history, the experience of their bygone lives, must tell us that for some twenty years at least the Lord "stood at their door, and knocked"—that Redeemer against whom they were daily sinning with a high hand, against whose name they felt themselves justified in doing every thing, and whose people "called to be saints, and sanctified in Christ Jesus," they looked down upon, despised, ridiculed and persecuted! How does the Scripture again and again describe this to be a feature of the dealings of God with a sinful people! He is spoken of, as being "merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth." We are told, that He "wants that He may be gracious." Oh! think, brethren, how much you who are converted, are indebted to that waiting

till it pleased Him to make you "willing in the day of His power!" And look at it, too, you who are unconverted, and think how God is now waiting: "behold, I stand"—not, "I have stood," but, "I am standing"—"I stand at the door and knock." The great object which the Lord has, is that His goodness should lead you to repentance; God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

But, He does not stand quietly by. True, there are cases, where He sees that no good will be done, and therefore He remains passive; just as He stood weeping over Jerusalem, and declared that they might have considered the things which concerned their peace, but that now they were hid from their eyes. But it is not so, my brethren, that He is dealing with you at this time; it is not so, that He is dealing with you, who are assembled here to-night. He sends a message to every one of you. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

Every knock is not quite of the same character. There are some, at whose door He knocks with the power of His Word, hammering (as it were) at the hard door of their hard hearts, trying to arouse the careless and indifferent. It is not so that He speaks to all; for with that same Word, where there is a willing heart, does He speak in the tones of gentleness and love. He will speak, indeed, as a "son of thunder," to those who are obstinate and rebellious; but when He beholds some Zaccheus, "desiring to see Jesus," He says to him by that Word—"Make haste, and come down; I will sup with thee to-night." But in one way or the other is He speaking to every one of you, that are here present. I cannot tell where there is that heart of oak, hardened so that it seems almost impossible to penetrate it; I cannot tell where there is that gentle, willing, inquiring spirit, that only needs to be told to look at Jesus, and believe, and be saved; but this I know, that there is a message for you all in one word—"Take heed how ye hear." Oh! it is Jesus, not His servant, that speaks; it is Jesus, that speaks—"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

Sometimes He takes the rod, and strikes at the door. It is then that He afflicts some, whom He has warned with deep solemnity, and to whom that warning has proved altogether vain. Sometimes He turns to one, whom He has

tried to win by sending His servants to speak of the promises and the privileges of His truth, and finding that there is still a bar across that door, and still a refusal to receive them, He spurs His arm, and strikes at that door with His rod. It was thus He acted with Manasseh of old. Manasseh sinned, as you will remember, beyond all other sinners; there was he, not contented with sinning himself, not contented with encouraging idolatry, but as it were compelling others to run into every kind of iniquity and transgression against the Lord. But He afflicted Manasseh; Manasseh was taken prisoner, and brought "among the thorns," and then He saw that there was One that he had to deal with, from whom his own royal power could not free him. He fell down, therefore, and confessed his iniquity, imploring mercy at the hand of his God; the affliction was sanctified, the rod was listened to, the door was opened, and the Lord was admitted to Manasseh's heart. And are there none amongst you, that He has thus chastened? I need not stay to dwell upon the character of affliction; I need not stay to describe one that may be suffering from the loss of friends, or another from the loss of property, or a third from personal attacks; these things matter not; but it is the Lord, that allows the rod. It is the Lord, therefore, who says to you, "Why should ye be stricken any more?" It is the Lord, who, knowing your condition, speaks as He did of His ancient people in the first chapter of Isaiah, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment;" and therefore He chastises you. Oh! see to it, that that rod is not uplifted in vain.

There are others, whom He convinces simply by the operation of His Spirit, without any intervening providential dealing, to which we can specially refer. Thus we find some convinced deeply of their own sinfulness; persons who for some ten or twenty years may have made a boast of their righteousness, and stood forth as boldly as the Pharisees of old, and "thanked God that they are not as others are, nor even as the Publicans," but who at last are brought, as Paul was, to see, that they have nothing wherewith to boast. That apostle might have excelled

in this thing by birth, and in that by conduct; but he counted all this "but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." He became convinced of sin; and he who thought himself "alive without the law once," found, when he understood that law, that he was dead. It is thus with some of you, brethren. The Lord has knocked at the door of your heart by the convincing power of the Spirit, and you have felt anxious to inquire the meaning of those knocks; you have then known what conviction of sin is, and you have opened your hearts, and received the Saviour, and found peace to your troubled souls.

It is in the same way, that He at times arouses those, who are sleeping and slumbering in their sins. He finds them very much in the state described in the Song of Solomon. The voice of the Beloved was heard, "Open to Me;" but the answer was—"I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" Or, as you may have said, 'I cannot attend to these things now; I am sleepy and tired; the heat overcomes me, the fatigue of the day has wearied me, I cannot receive these things now; speedily I will listen, at a more convenient season.' But the Lord by His Spirit says to such an one, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Then those who have been slumbering, like the foolish virgins of old without any oil in their lamps, rise up quickly, and begin with earnestness to seek; they find, ere it is too late, that it is Jesus knocking at their hearts, and they receive Him, and find themselves now living branches of the true Vine, looking to Jesus as "the chiefest among ten thousand," and "altogether lovely."

But, dear brethren, it is not always that the Lord continues thus knocking. "His Spirit shall not always strive with men." And if there are some here, who are sleeping and slumbering, thinking of anything rather than of those things that concern their immortal souls, and with their hearts still in the world, let them take heed lest this knocking should be over to-night, and lest that same Lord, who in His condescension declares that He has stood at the door, and has been knocking and waiting there that they might receive Him, should turn, and say, "If they are joined to idols, let them alone." Oh! where will they be, if Jesus shall so speak concerning their souls this night?

Once more. the knocking implies a repeated act. And so God has dealt with you. He "stands at the door, and knocks;" you have heard the knocking, but you would not answer it. You have attended sermons, which have described your own case, and you have felt inclined to say, while your history has been repeated, "This man has told me all things that ever I did;" thus the Spirit of God has sent a message to you. But you have refused to admit Him; you have returned to your worldliness, and given your heart up again to vanity. And yet the Lord still knocks, and knocks repeatedly. "Line upon line, precept upon precept," sermon after sermon, is sent to arouse you; ordinance after ordinance is spoken of in your hearing; every Sabbath day is a knock at your hearts; every time you are asked to come to the Lord's table, there to see the preaching by signs instead of words of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," that is a knock at your door. How long do you think this repetition of knocking will be allowed to continue?

I stay not to inquire into the fact. God is long-suffering; and yet there is an appointed time, for you and for me.

II. I pass, therefore, to the second head of my subject; namely, the promise to the faithful, or, in other words, to those who hear and are willing to receive Jesus. "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

Here we have, first of all set forth, the union that is betwixt Christ and the believer. The moment that you or I receive Jesus by faith, that moment we become united closely to Him, and we have all the benefits of that union. What strength we require, we draw from Him; what comfort we want, we receive in the sympathy of our Redeemer. Whatever we need, we have in Christ, whatever we want, we have grace for grace. If we are asked, how we stand before God: we stand complete in Jesus.

But there is more than this implied. "I will sup with him:" by which I understand the most intimate friendship, or that which the Scripture speaks of as fellowship with Jesus. We are spoken of, as believers, as being in fellowship with Christ; Christ is "anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows." When once we receive Him into our hearts, He considers us no longer as servants, but as friends. This, in fact, is God's design; and it is our hope, as

Christians; that we may be united with Christ, and, He being "formed in us," we may experience the fulness of that text from which you were addressed this afternoon—"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

But here let me remark, that this is only for those who open their hearts, not their heads; those who give their affections, not their ears, to the Lord Jesus; in other words, not all of you who are merely listening, but those of you who are hearing to profit, who come really for some benefit to your souls, and are willing to walk as we to please the Lord; who, when you hear, obey; who are "not hearers only, but doers of the Word;" who are not sleepy, careless attendants in the house of God; who do not come to scoff, but to pray, who are not thinking of the world, but of heaven. "If any man," rich or poor, learned or unlearned, "hear My voice, and open the door," and is willing to serve Me, "I will come in to him." There is no fellowship with Christ for those who are ungodly. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie;" if any man speaks of having received Christ, and having fellowship and communion and union with the Saviour, and is committing works of darkness, he stands there a living lie. It is the apostle John, that states it. Look therefore into the condition of your own hearts, my dear brethren, and see how you stand in the sight of God.

But I must pass on, to draw your attention to one or two practical remarks, connected with this subject.

And first, observe from whence the first movement comes towards saving a sinner. It comes from God. It is not your good will, nor your anxiety, but God, having "first loved you," has brought you to hear that knock at the door of your hearts, and caused you to open to receive the Saviour. What love there is on the part of God, towards a lost and ruined world! But remember, that if He first knocks, your will must consent; and therefore it is so anxious to say, "The Lord has not opened my heart." It is just as our Lord said, "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life."

We exhaust not at whose heart the Lord may be knocking effectually this very night. And it is a great comfort to a sinner, that he is permitted just to deliver his message, and leave the result entirely to the Lord: and if he only speak

faithfully of Jesus, some result will follow, to the praise and to the glory of his God. There may be some to whom the exhortation I have already given has been repulsive, but I care not for that, there may be some one, who was least expecting to profit by the truth, to whom this message has come, and who, having entered this house a careless sinner, shall leave it a converted one, with Christ within "the hope of glory."

But who amongst you are trifling, ought to be known to your own souls; and I would therefore put the question, in what state of mind did you enter this house of God? I would appeal to any one, who knows that he came here in an unconverted state, and entreat him solemnly to remember the laws he has transgressed during the course of his life, the invitations of mercy he has slighted, to remember how God has commissioned His servants to stand and in Christ's place pray him to be reconciled to God, to remember that this has been the free offering of God to him—that it is of His free mercy He has appealed to his heart and conscience again and again. And let me tell such a person, who feels no desire to give up all for the Lord, that not a knock has been given at the door of his heart, which has not been noted down in the book of God's remembrance. A fellow-creature, we know, may come to our door, and knock again and again, and obtain no answer, and wearied with his waiting, he may count the times. The Lord has done so. He has counted those knocks at your door; and He now stands saying, "All the day long I have stretched forth My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." Oh! brethren, do not try the patience of your God any more. There is a knock now—"behold, I stand at the door, and knock;" try not that patience any more, lest it should be the last knock, and then, when in a moment of anxiety perhaps for your life you turn to Him and say, "Lord, have mercy upon me, oh! let me in—let me in to heaven,"—He should say, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me." The order is reversed; it is no longer Jesus standing at your door and knock

ing, but you in fear and trembling calling upon Him. Oh! then, be not a careless and indifferent hearer; for if these knockings are noted, your carelessness is observed this very night, and will be brought against you in that day.

But I am sure that there are many amongst you, who are truly anxious in mind, and are thinking—"The Lord has been knocking at my door; oh! could I but feel sure that if I said "Enter in," it should be done, then indeed I should not have come to this Church to-night in vain; I should leave it a Christian, not only in name, but in truth." And why should you not? Have I not been telling you, that Jesus knocks by His Word, and by His ministers* and what is there, that is required on your part? You say, that you are so unworthy; that your heart is not met; that you have broken so many resolutions. I grant it all; but

Jesus "stands at the door and knocks," and He does not say that He must be admitted with great pomp by some one in a scarlet livery, but that "the broken and contrite spirit He will not despise." He turns to the poorest in their own esteem, and says, "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in."

Dear brethren, will you receive Him? Will you let Christ enter in to your heart? Will you be numbered with His people? Oh! it is Satan, that tells you you are not good enough. It is Satan, that tells you Christ is a hard master. The Bible pictures Him as Love; the Christian experiences Him as love; and you, if you will listen to Him, shall find Him to be love for ever. Oh! listen to the knocking; lay bare that heart of yours; and say from its innermost recesses—"Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

THE HOUSE APPOINTED FOR ALL LIVING.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D.

PREACHED AT THE SCOTCH NATIONAL CHURCH, (CROWN COURT,
COVENT GARDEN, ON SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 1, 1845.

"I know that Thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living."—Job xxx. 23.

SUCH was the clear conviction of the afflicted patriarch; and such too must be our own experience, as well as that of all living. We have here intimated in these words the absolute certainty of death. "It is appointed to all men once to die." All around may be uncertain, but this is sure. The faintest form must mingle with the dust; the strongest frame must be dissolved; the most exalted in the circles of mankind must say to corruption, Thou art my mother; and to the worm, Thou art my sister.* Every preacher of this truth must also personally practice it. If we had the wings of the eagle, we could not escape from it; if the strength of the lion, we could not resist it; if the riches of Croesus, we could not bribe death; or if the voice of the nightingale, we could not charm it away. It takes the monarch from his throne, the minister from his pulpit, the

babe from the bosom of its mother. It comes to all; only, like the wilderness-pillar, what is glory to Israel, is darkness to Egypt. Every eye that is now rivetted on me, shall very soon be closed; every ear that now hears me, deaf; and every heart, still; and every home the habitation of another; and "the place that knows us now, shall know us no more for ever."

But it may be asked, what were the definite grounds on which Job could say, "I know that Thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living."

These were, in the first place, what he saw.

The history of his own household was to him the sure prophecy of his own dissolution. There were tombs around him in the land of Uz, as well

as in England; and in the memorial tablets of his dead, he had already inscribed on their epitaphs this creed, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." On the green acres of his native land there rose graves, like wavelets on the ebbing sea of life. He himself stood upon the ashes of his children, a forest tree rest of the parasite plants that gave it beauty for sustenance, naked, dismantled; and every wind that swept past awoke in the lonely cells of his broken heart—"I know that Thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living." Have we no similar mementos? Are there not in our memories the hushing echoes of the muffled bell? Are there not in our homes broken circles whose arcs will not be complete till time be no more? Look at the portrait on the wall—at the hatchment on the house—the hair in that locket—those books in the library—the mourners in the streets; and does not every one of these fragments reflect a known likeness and comment on this our text?

Job's own bodily sufferings intimated also the same result. These increased and accumulated, and plainly testified, unless arrested in the providence of God, to dissolution. Disease is still the plowman of death, the cutter for the grave. Every grey hair is evidence that death has breathed upon us; every headache, the touch of the icy finger of death on the seat of life, constituting each in succession an intimation from on high, "Set your house in order."

Creation around him impressed on him the same conclusion. In the fourteenth chapter he shews he had learned and gives instances of this teaching: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down, he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." The whole of this chapter is replete with such imagery. And autumn still preaches the death of the year; when its breath has swept the forests of the earth, the very trees look like crowds of skeletons shivering in the storm, yet pointing to the skies as if in expectancy of a revival of the resurrection of the spring. Night is the death of day. Sleep, which is peculiar to earth, unknown in heaven, and impossible in hell, is a semi-suspension of life—a type of death. Awake, we seem to have a hold of life; asleep, we seem to have let life go,

and to lie helplessly at the mercy of death.

Job learned this certain lesson in the text from Divine teaching. He spoke as did all the sacred writers by the Spirit of God: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." One would imagine that there would be very little necessity that God should teach a lesson, every one cannot but see. One would imagine it as unnecessary to teach this, as that the needle points to the north. But if we may judge of the force of a conviction by the influence it exerts, we cannot but conclude that this is feeble indeed. We feel the truth in the text in all its fullness and power, when we bury our dead; but soon the pomps of time, the pageantry of circumstance, and the excitements and rivalries of the world, sweep over our hearts, and impressions we thought engraven by a pen of iron on the rock for ever, are effaced, like inscriptions on the sand, by the first wave of the advancing tide. David, aware of this, prays, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am." "Teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom."

Let us here also learn *who* is the immediate dispenser of death. "Thou wilt bring me to death." We are prone to attribute all to second causes. When death comes, we are often found saying, 'If it had been so, it had been otherwise; if such aid had been called in, if such precautions had been taken, he had not died.' Faith will raise its head above all encompassing perplexities, and say with Eli—"It is the Lord." Job, amid the dim lights of the patriarchal dispensation, said, 'Not the winds that smote, nor the Sabæans that assailed, but "the Lord, hath taken away." "Thou wilt bring me to death." "The hairs of our head are numbered," and the days of our life also. "Is there not an appointed time to man on earth?" Disease has no infection, and death no power, till the one is loosed, and the other commissioned from God. He cuts down the flower, and, blessed thought! He spares the green and takes the ripe. What comes, is "the cup my Father hath given me to drink;" and when most inexplicable, we have still light enough to read—"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Our feeling in such circumstances must not be the submission of slaves, but the acquiescence of sons.

Let us notice, in the next place, Job's personal application and appropriation of the truth in the text:—"I know that Thou wilt bring me to death." For want of this, we miss the full effect of many of the most influential truths. Yet personal religion is emphatically the religion of the Bible; its truths are not only for humanity, but for me. "Thou wilt bring me to death." "I know that my Redeemer liveth." "I know in whom I have believed." "Whom have I in heaven but Thee?"

Do you thus translate Christianity from the impersonal into the personal? Do you feel that the Bible was written and inspired as much for you, as if you were the only person in the universe? Faith will enable you thus to concentrate scattered lights in one personal focus, and in its light to see your own souls linked to all great and enduring things above, below, or around you.

We have, next, the description of that change, of which the patriarch was thus personally assured. He calls it "death," and "the house appointed for all living." Death is the child of sin, though grace has made it the servant of Jesus. It is not annihilation. It is the separation, however, of soul and body, the latter ceasing to live, and the former leaving its tenement of clay as the lightning leaves its cloud, and changing not its character, but its outward circumstances. The twain that God joined, death puts asunder; the holy wedlock is dissolved, the widowed dust reposes in the tomb, and the living spirit returns to Him who gave it, to wait the sound of the last trumpet, and the heaving of the last earthquake.

"When the judgment trumpet calls,
Soul, rebuild thy house of clay,—
Immortality its walls,
And eternity its day."

There is nothing natural or desirable in death itself. It is the disorganization of an exquisite structure, the dissolution of aasket second only in loveliness and beauty to the jewel it contains; and therefore humanity, in all its instincts, shrinks from the catastrophe. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." The apostle would brave the swellings of Jordan, because of the beauty of the land that lies beyond it. We are ready to pass through the fiery ordeal, because conscious of the truth, that the skirts of our garments only shall

be singed, while the soul, safe as in the citadel of God, shall only shine with greater lustre, rising on imperishable pinions, and resting not till it soars and sings with the seraphim beside the throne.

The body will not only experience death, but come also to "the house appointed for all living."

This is the only house that may be called the house of humanity. Into this house, palaces, courts, parliaments, Churches, all incessantly pour forth their inmates. It is the abode of kings and queens, of nobles, clergy, peasants, and beggars. It absorbs and annihilates all the petty distinctions of humanity. It is the standing-point, seen from which illustrious castles, and ancestral halls, dwindle into diminutive and remote perspective. Around the green hillocks of the dead, every sect might feel Catholic, and bitter foes grow friendly, and jarring mankind become conscious of the gravitating influence of essential and common brotherhood.

It is a dark house—"a land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness."

There is no lamp suspended from its ceiling, no penetrating sunbeam, by the light of which the dead can read the promises, or learn the doctrines of the Word of God. The first light that shall burst upon its chambers, will be the twilight of an eternal day. It is a solitary house. Though the kings and councillors of the earth are there, and with them the myriad millions of mankind, yet is there no communion; each is as much alone, as if none else were there.

It is also a silent house. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master." Though so many groups of the dead are there, yet all is silence without suspension. The tongue of the eloquent is dumb, and the ear of the once captivated hearer is deaf. The living preacher may make the tombstone his pulpit, and the green sod his fald-stool, but the sleepers beneath hear him not. Over them the chimes of Sabbath bells may float, undulating in the air like a mother's brooding note, calling her children home; but they hear not. The first and only sound that will shake the ashes of the dead, or break the silence

of the sepulchre, will be the knell of a dissolving world—"Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment."

It is, too, an ancient house. Its first stone was laid in Paradise, and each generation since has been a layer added to it. Every living creature has risen like a wavelet, and kings, and nobles, and scholars, like a wavelet crest, on this ever-ebbing, ever-sounding sea, has been sucked into its vortex in succession, and disappeared.

But even this house "appointed for all living," has a sunlit side. It is not an eternal prison-house, but a resting-place, a cemetery—*κοιμητήριον*—a sleeping place. I see written upon every stone in the crowded churchyard—"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." I can hear in the depths of its silent chambers the echoes of the voice of Jesus—"I am the resurrection and the life." And, probably, if I have appealed to nature—its autumn, its sleep, and its changes, for witnesses that all must die, we can educe no unimpressive intimations from the same lesson-book that all will live. The bud peeping from the hard bark of the tree—the rose emerging from her dry root—the winged insect from its chrysalis—are eloquent premonitions of death evolving life and immortality. Even decay has tints of life; the leaves that fall in autumn turn golden as they drop—the cold bleak winds of winter come in music, and the icicles suspended from the eaves of our houses, reflect the glories of the rainbow, and the shewn of palaces beyond the skies, as if to teach us to read resurrection lessons on the trophies and monuments of death.

It is not a strange house. Our fathers, and mothers, and sisters, and brothers, have pre-occupied it. Their ashes are peacefully reposing under its guardianship.

"Grave, the guardian of our dead,
Grave, the treasury of the skies;
Every atom of its dust,
Rests in hope again to rise."

The Lord of glory lay in it, perfuming it by His presence, and giving it a consecration which neither presbyters nor prelates can impart. "Come, see where the Lord lay." On this house "appointed for all living," the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Co-

riuthians is inscribed for an epitaph.

My brethren, I have illustrated the text by my sermon; I must now day enforce it by my death. The emphasis of the latter will enforce whatever eloquence or earnestness may be in the former. I witnessed the truth of this, last Friday, when I beheld the remains of the Rev. William Nicholson, Rector of St. Maurice, Winchester, and the brother of my wife, lowered, in the meridian of life, into the vault opened in the floor of the Church he had been instrumental in rebuilding, as if to be his tombstone. The sacred edifice was crowded with the sorrowing parishioners. There were present some thirty or forty clergymen in their robes, and one in his winding sheet. The pulpit was empty, for the preacher occupied the grave. The venerable archdeacon read the impressive service, but the voice the people seemed to hear—the voice that found an echo in every heart, rose in awful and piercing energy from the minister that slept sweetly in his shroud. "I know that Thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living."

Brethren, "blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." "Absent from the body," is "present with the Lord." He not cleave to this earth, do not feel toward it as your rest. "Weep as though you wept not, rejoice as though you rejoiced not." Let not its glare blind you, nor its din stun you, nor its passions and its lusts creep and curl around your heart, and chill it to eternal joys. See you not amid its palaces and halls "the house appointed for all living?" Hear you not amid the blending voices of the daughters of music, "I know that Thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living?"

Make sure of an interest in the precious sacrifice, and meritorious passion of Jesus. In His righteousness, you can meet death with joy. Through Him you will be more than conqueror. Death has no advantage whether he come as a friend or as a foe, for in the one capacity you are prepared to welcome him, and in the other to vanquish him. It is only when death comes as a stranger, that his stroke is dreadful. By you, I trust, he is duly estimated—stingless, shameless, curmudgeon, because to you Christ is precious—the eternal Spirit your comforter, the everlasting God your Father, and unutterable glory your home.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM CHALMERS, A.M.

PREACHED AT THE MARYLEBONE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION,
17, EDWARD STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE, ON SUNDAY EVENING,
MARCH 23, 1845.

For there shall be no night there."—Revelation xxi. 25

THE alternations of light and darkness, you are aware, are caused by the revolution of the earth upon its axis; and, according as any part of it is presented to, or turned from the sun, it is visited with day or with night. This arrangement is one of the highest proofs of Divine wisdom and goodness; for in this world, and according to our present constitution, the periodical return of night is an unspeakable blessing. It lengthens by contrast the enjoyment of the day. Light becomes more grateful, because of the preceding darkness; and morn is ushered in with louder songs, because night had been the reign of deepest silence. True, the darkness throws a veil over the beauties of earth; but then it draws the curtain, and reveals the glories of heaven. True, it takes from us the pleasant sight of flowers and plants, but then it is the gentle nurse of nature, and pours into her bosom those cooling dews that beget new life and vigour. True, it wraps men in a sleep like death, but then it prevents the ruin of life, by restoring what was wasted during the day, for night is emphatically the season of repose. It unbends the world, and gives a short and needful truce to labour. The body, that is exhausted by toil, it refreshes. The mind, that has been worn by care and thought, it restores to elasticity. The spirits, that have been scattered by long watching, it collects and settles. And, when at length the charm is broken, and with noiseless step it leaves us, man starts at once into new life and renovated existence. At the call of God's herald, the morning sun, he goes forth to his labour, an altered being, and enters on a new and active day with joy in his heart and vigour in his arm.

As we are now constituted, perpetual day would be a curse; its interchange with night—the amiable and peaceful

war betwixt light and darkness, and the alternate victory of night—is the source of unnumbered blessings.

But there are other aspects, in which it is less pleasant to contemplate night. With night and darkness we naturally associate the ideas of ignorance, pollution, insecurity and pain; and of course it must be in contrast with night, viewed in such relations, that of heaven it is said—"There shall be no night there."

The text is a figurative description of the heavenly state; of its perfection, glory, and joy. And, therefore, when these are depicted by the fact that there night is unknown, we must regard this language as declaring the entire exclusion from that blessed place, of all those painful circumstances which our minds connect with the idea of night; nay, not the mere exclusion of what is painful, but the presence in the highest degree of the very opposite circumstances—of what is positively good and deservable.

I. First, then, ignorance is associated with our idea of night. And hence the declaration, that there is "no night" in heaven, must be understood as meaning that heaven is a place where ignorance is unknown—the seat of perfect knowledge.

The darkness and the night of ignorance, in contrast with the day and light of knowledge, are emblems with which all are familiar. They are household words. As darkness conceals every thing from view, so light makes every thing visible. The one is the source of ignorance, the other of knowledge: "Whosoever doth make manifest," saith the apostle, "is light." Is there, then, no night in heaven? Then there ignorance is unknown; it is the seat of perfect knowledge. Oh! how far otherwise with the world in which we live! It is do-

scribed in Scripture as "a dark place." Darkness is said to "cover the earth, gross darkness the people;" by which is meant that men are naturally ignorant of all which it is needful for them to know in their relation to God, either as creatures or as sinful creatures. Ready to drink in the knowledge of things visible and vain, they are averse to listen to or to know things invisible and Divine. An acquaintance with the objects around them, that are earthly and perishing, they eagerly desire; but the "god of this world hath blinded their minds" against all acquaintance with things of heavenly and everlasting moment. To the stern realities of the Bible, the men of the world are indifferent and dead. It is an undoubted reality, that God is ever with them, in them, and about them; that they, with every thing that breathes the breath of life, are in "the hollow of His hand." They see it not; they know it not. It is an undoubted truth, that He hath given them a law like Himself, "holy, just, and good," to which they are bound to yield implicit, cheerful, universal obedience. They see it not; they know it not. It is an undoubted truth, that every deed they do, and thought they think, and word they utter, reaches into eternity—is linked with their everlasting destiny, and will start up hereafter to witness for or against them. They see it not; they know it not. It is an undoubted reality, that God's Word speaks in the accents of infallible truth; that it is at once a reprove and a guide—a beacon light to warn them of the dangers of sin—a star, to lead them in the course of duty. They see it not; they know it not. It is an undoubted truth, that they themselves are fallen, guilty, perishing; that in Christ alone is salvation, and with His Spirit alone the fountain of holiness. They see it not; they know it not. It is an undoubted truth, that they must soon die; that after death is judgment; that unrepenting, unforgiven, they shall be desolated by the tempest of Divine wrath in all the overwhelming fury of its storm. Oh! they see not this; they know not this. Surely, the darkness of night is here.

But even in the people of God, into whose heart "He hath abided to give the light of the knowledge of His glory," that knowledge is at the best a dark and limited thing. They are in "a land

where the light is as darkness." They know, indeed, for the Spirit of Truth hath showed it to them, that in Christ alone is salvation. But what do they know of Christ Himself? What of the glories of His supreme divinity?—what of the lustre of His spotless humanity?—what of His unsearchable riches—of His overflowing fulness—of His amazing exaltation—of His surpassing greatness? How little is their acquaintance with the blessed Jehovah; with His infinite and unchangeable nature, His wondrous works, and His exalted ways! True, with the eyes which He has unsealed, they cannot look abroad on nature's splendid works, without discovering the footsteps of nature's mighty God. Would they behold His power? They "look up unto the heavens which His own fingers framed." His goodness? They see it in the earth around, which it waters like a mighty river. His wisdom? It is written in themselves, "fearfully and wonderfully made." His justice? Why are they "troubled on every side?" His patience? If it was not boundless, they were not here. True, that when they turn from the vast creation and from providence, to the revelation of God in the Gospel of His Son, there, in the face of Jesus Christ, His glory shines with an effulgence yet more bright; there, are "treasures of wisdom and knowledge," an exhibition of the Divine perfections that makes their eyes to glisten and their hearts to burn. Still, "these are parts of His ways." The full "thunder" of His perfections, what heart can comprehend? Not only do clouds hang thick upon the throne, but by reason of the darkness and the mist of sin, which still enwraps their spirits, they are blind to half the brightness of those characters, in which God has writ His excellency on the work and person of His Son. And, then, how much of what they acknowledge as truth is profoundly mysterious! What difficulties stand forth on every side! How many intricacies to be unravelled, and discrepancies to be reconciled! How often, when musing on the Almighty and His dealings, are they compelled to exclaim, "Unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" And what is their knowledge of the plague of their own hearts? They are ashamed to speak of it. So deceitful above all things are their hearts, so desperately

wicked, so sadly wayward, so strangely inconsistent, that they cannot know them. The light they have is but a beam shot across the chaos within, revealing some features of its hideousness. Their wisdom is just sufficient to show them, as they trembling look, that there is but a step between them and death. But "there shall be no night there."

In contrast to all that we have said, heaven is a place of perfect knowledge. We pretend not to say what various kinds of knowledge may illustrate the spirits of the just. We presume not to decide whether philosophy shall take her seat in heaven, and science throw open her mysterious treasures, and taste exhibit the chambers of her richest imagery; but we are entitled to believe, that, as truth is the natural food of the soul, which it greedily desires and joyfully receives; that, as truth is the peculiar ornament of the mind, clothing it with grace and lustre; that, as truth is the special wealth of reason, making it prosperous and strong; that, as truth is to the inner man what light is to the outer world, the source of activity and joy; that, as error and doubt are the defects and deformity of the soul—then, because heaven is a place of perfection, knowledge, which is the possession of truth, will be perfect there. It will embrace all that can ennoble and enrich and embellish our nature; all that can give to our head the "ornament of grace," and "the crown of glory."

But the knowledge that shall chiefly bless the inhabitants of heaven, is the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. It is in contrast to such ignorance as this, whose seat and temple is earth, that of heaven it is said, "There shall be no night there." This is the highest and best of attainments; this is "life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

But, to know God, the self-existent, the eternal, the unchangeable, whose dwelling-place is mystery, the infinitely wise, the supremely excellent, the holy, just, and true—to know His co-equal, co-eternal Son, Jesus Christ, the "only begotten," "full of grace and truth;" the Wisdom of the Father; "the Light of the world;" the Friend of fallen man!—to know the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of knowledge and revelation; the

kindling breath of the Almighty; the fountain of purity and peace!—alas! to speak of these glorious persons, is but to be reminded that we have not learned the language of heaven—that our feet still press the vile earth—that our companions still are men. Behold, God is very great, and we know Him not. To talk in this dim and cloudy world, on themes like these, is to "darken counsel by words without knowledge;" for, as children here, we speak "childish things." O God! to know Thee is life, and to make mention of Thy name is joy; but yet our soundest knowledge of Thee is to know, that here we cannot know Thee as Thou art; our safest speech concerning Thee is when, without confessing, by silence we confess, that Thy majesty is incomprehensible, Thy glory beyond our capacity and reach.

It does not seem possible that even in heaven God can be perfectly comprehended by His creatures. The line of created intellect, is it not too short to fathom the depths of the Divine nature? Will not the infinite ever outstretch that which is finite? "Who can by searching find out God? who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?" "The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."

Still, "there shall be no night there." Our knowledge shall be bounded only by the limit of our capacity. There shall be no ignorance of any thing which it is useful or possible for us to know. And the knowledge then possessed, shall be unstained by specious error, untinged by delusive colouring, chequered no more like the twilight of the morning with the shades of night; but, so clear, so large, so well defined, so void of perplexity and doubt, so elevating, so quickening, so Divine, that, compared to what now is, we shall "see face to face;" we shall "know even as we ourselves are known."

Knowledge is the foundation of love and reverence and obedience. "He that loves not, knows not God;" and if heaven is a place where God is supremely loved and revered and served, it is a place where He is perfectly known.

The knowledge of heaven may be progressive, just as the light "shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" but it is a progress without pain. It is never paid for at the costly price of health. The mind shall not thee, like the flint, be

consumed by every spark it strikes. It shall not reach its end by slow, laborious steps; but, led to the fountain of living waters, it shall drink at the head-spring of free, unsealed, and ever-flowing truth. And as it is gained without toil, it is enjoyed without intermission and without end. The light of heaven never wanes. Its sun never goes down. In the history of the world there have been seasons when the knowledge of God has been buried in the dust of ages; the "Sun of Righteousness" has suffered a total eclipse, and the earth has been mantled with more than Egyptian darkness. And thus it is that we talk of the dawn of light at the glorious Reformation. But there are no "dark ages in heaven." It is one unclouded, bright, eternal day. The shadows of evening never close upon it, for "there shall be no night there."

II. But, secondly, the language of the text implies, that heaven is a place where sin is unknown, the seat of perfect holiness.

Light is the fairest and the purest of earthly things, if that can be called earthly which is a heaven-born visitant. It is the parent of beauty, and seems almost to create what it only reveals. Utterly incapable of being itself defiled, and the enemy of all pollution, by disclosing its loathsomeness, it is a striking emblem of moral purity. Hence, while deeds of wickedness are called "deeds of darkness," holiness is styled "the armour of light." Of God, the fountain of purity, it is said, that He "is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." The dominion of sin is called the "power of darkness;" and those who are in some degree sanctified, are entitled "the children of light."

If the holiness of the men of the world we need not speak. It is a thing unknown. Some knowledge they may have even in this dark place; some acquaintance with the subjects of revelation; but their knowledge, instead of purifying, only tends to deepen the pollution of their souls. It is in contrast with the imperfect holiness of God's people on earth, that our text declares of heaven, "There shall be no night there." Even in the holiest of God's people on earth, much of the night and darkness of sin, in which they were born, remains. Their sun does not always so brightly shine. There is much

below, to dim the lustre of their moral beauty. They have indeed been brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light; but their day is a day of cloud and storm. There is a "law in their members warring against the law of their minds." "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." Faith is in conflict with unbelief; the love of Christ struggles with the love of the world; courage, with timidity; zeal, with indifference; self-denial, with self-indulgence; impatience, with submission; humility, with pride. Hope triumphs over fear, when the green mountain tops are seen to rise above the waters of some mighty deluge; but when the tempest is heard again to howl, and the waters are seen again to prevail, hope's anchor falls; and the storm-tossed soul can find no rest, and beats about in the deep anguish of despair. Heavenly affections mount towards their God, and already they seem to have touched and to be gilded by that light which is on the borders of the happy land; but alas! the sun goes down; they wander in a pathless region; and the gathering darkness sends them back to earth. But "there shall be no night there!"

There, there will be perfect holiness, an entire conformity of soul to the will of God. Here, the ransomed spirit is but "coming up from the miry wilderness, leaning on its Beloved; there, it reposes in His bosom, His ornament and delight. Here, it is clothed in garments spotted with the flesh; there, in the pure and spotless robes of heaven. Here, it is not holy yet, but knowing the beauty, it pants after the possession of perfect holiness; but the soul is without sin or blemish there. No remnant or effect, no stain or trace of the accursed thing is on it. It breathes an atmosphere that is untainted, and it breathes it without ever tainting it. It rests from the conflicts that now weary it. It casts off the fears that now perplex it. Partaker of the Divine nature, it bears the lineaments of the Divine countenance; and like the sower, in an evening calm, reflecting with unbroken image the glories of that heaven to which its face is ever turned, the soul above shall be like God himself, because it "sees Him as He is."

Heaven is a place of perfect holiness, just because there, God is perfectly known. The proper effect of the know-

ledge of God, is to purify the soul. "Sanctify them," prays our Lord, "through the truth; Thy Word is truth." This purifying influence, it is the privilege of Christians to enjoy on earth. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image." And if such is the effect of the knowledge of God on earth, when seen through a dim and doubtful medium; if here it cleanses and adorns the soul—here, where there is so much to pollute and to deface; what must be the effect of the immediate, the clear, and the permanent vision of God, in the sanctuary above? What the holiness, when He shall be seen no longer "as in a glass darkly," but "face to face."

If it is holiness, profoundly to reverence and humbly to adore the Divine majesty; then, in heaven, where that majesty is perfectly visible, and will bow all intelligence in lowliest adoration, there will be perfect holiness. If it is holiness highly to esteem God for His Divine perfection and peerless excellence, then, in heaven, where they are perfectly known, and beam forth rays of dazzling lustre, there will be perfect holiness. If it is holiness supremely to love God, to give Him the flower and the fruit of our affections, in acknowledgment of the blessings, infinitely great and innumerable many which He has poured into our lap, then there will be perfect holiness in heaven; for there we shall perfectly know and intensely feel the extent and the weight of those obligations under which He has laid His redeemed ones; by which He has rivetted upon Himself their supreme regards.

There He will reveal the vast treasures of His wisdom, the riches of His goodness, the beauties of His truth, the glories of His power; there, all that goes to illustrate and to tell the height and the depth, the length and the breadth, of that "love" to sinners, "which passeth knowledge;" there, that, when for our rebellion we were cast out of paradise, and hurried with a sentence of eternal death, Christ came to turn aside the flaming sword and to bear the mighty load; that, when God's truth in pronouncing the wages of sin to be death must be inviolate, God's holiness in abhorring all sin must be vindicated, God's justice in claiming that the law shall have its own must be satisfied,—when the Divine glory

and the happiness of man were parted to an immeasurable distance from each other, Christ travelled the fearful gulf between, that they might embrace and kiss each other; that He left the majesty in which He reigned, to become man, that He might suffer, and, standing forth as the sinner's representative, staggering under the burden of imputed guilt, was wounded for transgressions not His own, bruised for iniquities He knew not, and poured out His soul unto death which He deserved not; that He ransomed those that were His enemies at the price of His own life, a life without sin and without end; that He not only pardons those that were rebels, but lifts them up to the dignity of His sons; that He not only levelled the giant barrier which sin had thrown up between God and man, but cleft a channel deep and broad, down which, forth from the abyss of the Divine benevolence, might roll that river which makes glad the city of our God. Oh! in heaven there will be perfect holiness, because there these glorious truths will be perfectly known and felt! They will kindle in the spirits of the just a flame of love to God, which, while it warms, shall purify; a fire upon the altar of their souls, whose brightness and whose fervour, shall keep for ever far away the least approach of sin, and send up before the throne of the Eternal Majesty, a savour of the sweetest incense.

And this pure light of holiness, that burns and shines in heaven, shall never be diminished nor destroyed. The source of it is God himself, the "Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, or shadow of turning." It is a purity that is safe from every inroad, beyond the reach of every foe. Here, the voice of the tempter is hourly heard. Watching round the gate of the city of God, he searches for an opening that he may enter in. Here, his assaults are hourly to be met. Hence the Christian on earth is never for a moment secure. Encompassed by dangers on every side, he is always on his guard. His bow is ever bent, the arrow quivers on the string. If he builds with the trowel in one hand, his sword for defence is in the other; and if he can be said to rest at all, he rests upon his arms; his head is pillowed by his shield.

But heaven is a place where all is safety. "There the wicked cease from troubling,"

There the voice of the oppressor is heard no more. There the Christian's purity dreads no assault; his holiness fears no decay. This is beautifully taught us by the expression—"There shall be no night there." Night, you all know, is the season of danger, real or imaginary. In darkness we have a natural feeling of insecurity. We are afraid to move a step, because we do not know where to place it. Then does the traveller stumble in his benighted way. Then does the midnight thief invade our possessions, and the stealthy assassin assail our life. But how safe must be the holiness of heaven; how far away all peril and all gloom; how bright the picture of security and peace, when of the happy city it is said—"Its gates shall not be shut at all by day; there shall be no night there!"

III. But, thirdly, the language of the text implies, that heaven is a place of perfect activity and joy.

Men are prone to cherish the idea, that heaven is a place of lazy and listless repose. Thus we believe to be a serious mistake. We have no sympathy with those who speak of heaven as the seat of indolent and luxurious inactivity. The poet may kindle at the thought of it, as a region of richest beauty and sweetest fragrance. He may speak with rapture of its everlasting hills and its smiling valleys—of its fields clothed with endless verdure, and its gardens radiant with unfading flowers—of the life that breathes in every wind, and that flows in every stream—and of all the ether airy and romantic visions which imagination can call up, and fancy picture. He may talk of the spirits of the just made perfect, reposing themselves on flowery banks, in shadowy groves, and, without fear or cure, laughing an eternity away. Oh! surely, that were a "paradise for fools." That can be no fit enjoyment for the ransomed sons of God.

Does not the text breathe a different spirit, and speak another language? Night is the season of listlessness and inactivity; day, the period of zealous toil. What is more swift than the wings of the morning light? what more sluggish, dull, and dead, than the mist and the darkness? If, then, of heaven, it is true that there shall be no night, no darkness there, what other heaven can be taught but this;

that it is a scene of constant employment, that there will be no cessation in the active exertions of heaven?

Instead of regarding earth as a place of labour, and heaven as the seat of rest; we should rather view the present as the scene of discipline, and trial, and training, intended to furnish us with strength and skill, for the really active duties of the world to come.

What all these duties may be, we know not; but unquestionably there will be perpetual activity, the constant service of God. Were it not so, the Christian would be miserable. On earth he can do little for Him whom he loves. He has so much to do for himself; so many sins to destroy, so many enemies to conquer. And, therefore, he looks forward to heaven as a place, where, profiting by this scene of training and probation, and putting forth the manly strength which here he gained, he shall be able to do much for God; a place, where, freed from every encumbering weight, and every sin that now frets and grieves him, shaking off and leaving far behind the clay that clogs his feet on earth, he shall keep pace with the angels, swift as light; and with affections intent and never wavering, always burning, never wasting, quick as the lightning's glance, steady and unroiled as the sunbeam's tide, he shall never need to rest him on his messages of mercy, but, borne on rapid and unwearied wing, shall hold on in his steady and unfaltering way, doing the bidding and accomplishing the ends of that everlasting Friend, whom he delights to serve in the heavenly temple.

And as heaven is a place of perfect activity, so it is a place of perfect joy.

The very activity will be sweeter than repose; and what is spoken of on earth will be realized above—"the very toil will be the pleasure." Here activity is followed by languor and fatigue, and hence, with night, we associate the idea of needful repose. It is the season when weariness calls us to rest. But "there shall be no night there;" activity without exhaustion, labour without lamitude, nothing that requires the aid of repose and sleep, for suffering is a stranger there.

This characteristic of the heavenly state—its perfect joy—is strikingly set forth by the language of the text. With darkness we connect the ideas of sorrow and pain; with light, those of joy and glad-

ness. "Light is sown for the righteous; joy for the upright in heart." "Night is the time to weep," because then none can look upon our tears; but in heaven there are no tears to hide, no need of night to hide them. In this life our condition is neither perfectly good, nor perfectly evil; our light is "neither clear nor dark." Mercy sweetens one cup; judgment embitters the next. To-day Providence smiles upon us; to-morrow it seems our enemy. At one time we are surrounded by lovers and friends, but soon we are solitary and forlorn. The gourd of which we were exceeding glad, has early withered; the mountain which we thought stood strong, has failed us. Our best comforts are blighted, shrivelled, lost. And hence the nights on earth are many and dark. At the very best, this is a painful and a chequered scene; a series of combats and victories, of defeats and triumphs, of hopes and fears, of joys and sorrows. And so it must ever be, while our knowledge is imperfect, and our holiness partial and subject to decay. But "weeping endureth for a night, joy cometh in the morning." The days on earth may be evil; they are few. Soon will the darkness be past, and the true light shine. There shall be "no night" in heaven. There the tear of sorrow never wets the cheek, the heart is never wrung with anguish, the joy hand of death itself is dead. In God's presence is "fulness of joy." "At His right hand, pleasures for evermore." "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

Such are some of the views of the heavenly state, suggested to us by the figure of the text. It is a place of perfect knowledge, purity, safety, activity and joy. It might not have been difficult to amuse you with a high flown and fanciful description of the heavenly state; of its inhabitants, its pleasures, and its employments; but we have rather selected these simple and obvious views, because they appeared to be most deeply practical.

Brethren, you all profess to seek after heaven. Whatever be the path you tread

on earth, you are all ready to say, that you hope to arrive there at last. However some of you may seem to work for it, none of you will say that he wishes to taks up his final abode in hell.

Let me, then, put it to you: is the heaven which we have been describing, the heaven to which you have been looking? Have you merely viewed it as a refuge from the pains of hell? Or have you considered it as a place desirable, from the peculiar kind of its happiness; because its springs of joy are perfect knowledge, perfect holiness, perfect activity in God's service? If so, then what fruits have your belief produced? What efforts have you made to gain that character, which can alone fit you for enjoying it? What advances have you made in meekness for the inheritance in light?

Is heaven a place of perfect knowledge? Then, once darkness, are you now "light in the Lord?" Has He shined into your hearts? Is the day begun there? Do you "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ?"

Is heaven a place of perfect purity? Then, is this holiness the object of your deliberate choice and earnest pursuit? Do you "walk as children of the light?" What is holiness, but reverence for God's name and majesty? Do you ever profane it? What is holiness but obedience to the Divine commands? Do you ever wilfully violate them? What is holiness but the hatred of sin? Are you found cleaving to it? What is holiness but supreme love to God? And is this the constraining principle of all your actions?

Is heaven a place of perfect activity for God? Then, are you, by serving Him here, training yourselves for actively serving Him hereafter? How much of your time and energies do you employ in promoting His glory, or forwarding His cause upon earth? Do you regard it as your highest privilege to spend and be spent in His service? Or do you think, that as eternity is to be given to God, time you may give to yourselves?

Is heaven a place of pure and elevated joys? Then will they suit your taste? Do you love to walk in the light of God's countenance, and to hold intercourse with Him? To praise Him, is it a pleasant thing?

If you can answer these questions honestly and well, happy are you. Your "night is far spent, your day is at hand."

The light you now possess is no deceitful fire; it is a radiation from above; it is the morning beam of immortality; the prelude and the antepast of heaven. But if you shrink from such questions as these; if conscience tells you that you dare not answer them; if it whispers that to do so were but to proclaim your condemnation and your shame—then we are bound to tell you, that you have no part nor lot in the blessedness which the text describes. Its light will never cheer your dying bed, nor break upon you in eternity.

If here you desire not the knowledge of God and of His ways, you would take as much pleasure in the light of heaven as would the bird of night in gazing upon the sun. "What communion hath light with darkness?" If now you love not holiness, that "holiness, without which no man can see the Lord," your countenances would fall, your hearts would droop within you, and a "horror of thick darkness" would overtake you, were you to be placed in the very presence of the pure and spotless One.

Heaven is a place of activity for God. If then you are not trained for His service here, you could no more perform it there, than a child could hold the reins or guide the destinies of empire. It would be the most intolerable drudgery you ever endured. Heaven is a place of refined and elevated joys. And are these for him who is "of the earth, earthly?" Put "a jewel in a swine's snout;" think that the unclean beast would prefer the music of heaven to the mire in which it wallows, and you are as wise as to suppose, that the man who is "sensual, earthly and devilish," would relish and affect the joys of paradise, that are spiritual and Divine. To profess to seek after heaven, and yet to use no means to reach it! To rest contented with lazy wishes and idle anticipations, when there is a battle to fight, and a race to run, and a crown to be gained! To have no relish for the knowledge, purity, services, and joys of heaven, and yet to hope for an entrance when you die, and for happiness in it throughout eternity! We beseech you, is this sober wisdom, or is it the revelry of madness?

Oh! remember, that whatever be your character here, such will be your condition hereafter. There must be a correspondence between the inhabitant and the scene. If your inheritance is to be Light, you must "be light in the Lord." If you are the children of night, darkness must be your dwelling place. Choose then the better part. Contemplate the light that streams down on the earth from heaven; and trace it upward to its source. Look steadfastly at "things unseen and eternal." Look, till your eyes are dazzled by their brightness, and blind to every other sight.

And what you do, do now. We call you to durable riches: cling not an hour to poverty. We call you to the honour that cometh from above; be no more crowned with shame. We call you to rivers of heavenly pleasures: leave the bitter, shallow streams of earth. We call you to true, and highest wisdom: defer not till to-morrow to be wise. Oh! beware of that darksome gloomy land, which is overhung by the shadow of death. "Give glory to God, ere your feet stumble on the dark mountains, lest while you look for light, He make it gross darkness before you." Light may be looked for till the very moment when soul and body are to be severed. The spirit is summoned to depart; it seeks a passage; it struggles to be free; it quivers upon the lips. it is gone! It "looks for light"—but alas! its eye gazes upon darkness. God is before it, dwelling in light; and still it is darkness. Heaven is before it, where "there is no night;" and still it is darkness. Hell is before it, lighted up with the lurid glare of Divine wrath; and still it is darkness. Oh! what of the woe-stricken spirit then? Blessed be God! we know not, for we are not there; and none return to tell the living the unutterable lessons they have learned. Enough for us, that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Wherefore, "escape for thy life. Stay not in all the plain. Look not behind thee." "I am the light of the world," says Christ: "he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

